DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 447 443 CS 014 140

AUTHOR	Kenney, Lawrence M., Ed.
TITLE	The Reading Professor: Publication Forum for Professors of Reading Teacher Educators, 1999-2000.
INSTITUTION	International Reading Association, Newark, DE.
ISSN	ISSN-1066-2839
PUB DATE	2000-00-00
NOTE	237p.; A journal of the International Reading Association Special Interest Group called Professors of Reading Teacher Educators (PRTE).
AVAILABLE FROM	UW-Whitewater, College of Education, Winther Hall 2040, Whitewater, WI 53190-1790. Tel: 262-472-4677.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Serials (022)
JOURNAL CIT	Reading Professor; v22 n1-2 Fall-Spr 1999-2000
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC10 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; *Literacy; Professional Development; *Reading Consultants; *Reading Instruction; *Reading Teachers; Teacher Education
IDENTIFIERS	Special Interest Groups

ABSTRACT

A special interest group of the International Reading Association publishes a scholarly journal, "The Reading Professor: The Journal of Professors of Reading Teacher Educators." In Volume 22, No. 1, Fall 1999, the following articles are featured: "Young Children Draw Their Images of Literacy" (Roberta A. McKay and Maureen E. Kendrick); "A Comparison of Teachers' Knowledge and Use of Content Literacy Strategies" (Mary Z. Howe; Rich Radcliffe; Bonnie Higginson); "Teaching Reading in Inner-City Schools: Teacher Educators Learning from Teachers' Perspectives" (Carol Leroy and Mary Cronin); "Photo Story Writing: Integrating All Language Modes in Teaching Literacy to Elementary ESL Students" (Ping Liu and Richard Parker); and "Interpretive Comprehension: What the NAEP Results Mean for Teachers" (Dale Johnson and Bonnie von Hoff Johnson). In Volume 22, No. 2, Spring 2000, the following articles are featured: "Digital Literacy Portfolio Series: Purpose, Development, Implementation" (Elizabeth Baker); "An Answer to the Shortage of Secondary Reading Teacher Educators" (Gloria A. Neubert); "Identifying Evaluation Norms of Reading Faculty in Higher Education" (Mary B. Campbell); "Voices from the Field: Preservice Teachers' Cases as Sources of Information for Field-Based Teacher Preparation" (Janet C. Richards and Joan P. Gipe); and "Content Area Reading: Why Do I Have To Take This Class" (Patricia Luse Smith). (NKA)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 447 443

The Reading Professor: Publication Forum for Professors of Reading Teacher Educators, 1999-2000.

Volume 22 Numbers 1-2.
Lawrence M. Kenney, Ed.

CS014140

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND
DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS
BEEN GRANTED BY

L. Kenney

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

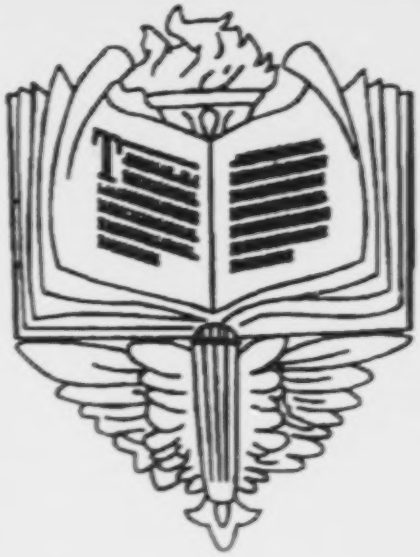
1

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.



THE READING PROFESSOR

Publication Forum for Professors of Reading Teacher Educators

Volume XXII, No. 1
Fall 1999

CS 014 140

THE READING PROFESSOR

The Journal of Professors of Reading Teacher Educators: A Special Interest Group of the International Reading Association

Editor Lawrence M. Kenney, University of Wisconsin Whitewater, Wisconsin
Associate Editor Marie C. Roos, Jackson State University Jackson, Mississippi

Editorial Advisory Board

Lois A. Bader, Michigan State University, East Lansing
Rita M. Bean, University of Pittsburgh
Allen Berger, Miami University, Oxford, OH
Susan Blair-Larsen, The College of New Jersey, Ewing
Mary Campbell, Saint Xavier University of Chicago
Sharon R. Gill, Murray State University, Murray, KY
Monica Gordon Pershey, Cleveland State University, Cleveland, OH
Ruth Hayden, University of Alberta, Canada
Joyce A. Hieshima, Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago
Amy R. Hoffman, John Carroll University, Cleveland, OH
Jeanne M. Jacobson, Hope College, Holland, Michigan
Dale D. Johnson, Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA
June Knafle, University of Illinois, Chicago
William R. McEachern, Nipissing University, North Bay, Ontario, Canada
Jesse C. Moore, East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania, East Stroudsburg, PA
Daniel Pearce, Texas A & M University, Corpus Christi, TX
Marie C. Roos, Jackson State University, Jackson, MS
Barbara A. Schaudt, California State University/Bakersfield

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Anthony J. Scheffler, Northwestern State University of Louisiana, Natchitoches
Barbara Schneider, Grand Valley State University, Grand Valley, MI
Gerry Shiel, St. Patrick's College, Dublin, Ireland
Terrence Stange, Arkansas State University, State University, AR
Sandra M. Stokes, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
Katherine Wiesendanger, Alfred University, Alfred, NY

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Professors of Reading Teacher Educators

Manuscripts for Journal
Dr. Larry Kenney
Winther 2040
College of Education
UW-Whitewater
Whitewater, WI 53190
Telephone 262-472-4677
Fax 262-472-5716
E-mail kenneyl@mail.uww.edu

Membership
Dr. Jesse Moore
10 Kiwanis Street
East Stroudsburg, PA 18301
570-422-3751
Fax 570-422-3920
E-mail jmoore@po-box.esu.edu

Canadian Membership
Dr. William R. McEachern
Nipissing University
Box 5002
100 College Drive
North Bay, Ontario
K2P1C8
Canada
705 474-3461, ext. 4567

Newsletter Articles
Dr. Cassaundra El-Amin
Department of Educational Curriculum and Instruction
Bowling Green State University
Bowling Green, OH 43403-0250
Telephone 419-372-7320
Fax 419-372-8265
E-mail celamin@bgnet.bgsu.edu

PRTE Program at IRA Convention
Dr. Marie Roos
Curriculum and Instruction
Box 18380
Jackson State University
Jackson, MS 39217
Telephone 601-853-7817
Fax same as above
E-mail MCR308@aol.com

GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

The Reading Professor seeks manuscripts dealing with topics, issues and events of interest to professors of reading. Authors are encouraged to submit articles and/or research studies that are directed toward the improvement of reading instruction at all levels of education. All authors must be members of both IRA and PRTE.

PREPARING AND SUBMITTING MANUSCRIPTS

Manuscripts should be typed and double-spaced (including references). The author's name, full address, and the date the manuscript is submitted should appear only on the cover page of each manuscript. Every effort should be made to avoid inclusion of the author's identity in any portion of the manuscript in order to secure an impartial view.

Send four copies of each manuscript to the editor. A word processor should be used; Microsoft Word 7.0 in IBM format is mandatory. Please print final copies using a letter-quality printer. If the manuscript is rejected, the author may request that a copy of the manuscript be returned; in that case, stamps for the return of the manuscript should be sent. If references are included, they should be cited in the article by name and date, for example, (Shantz, 1998). References at the end of the article should follow the format used in the International Reading Association journals, i.e., APA style, 1994.

EVALUATION OF MANUSCRIPTS

Upon receipt of a manuscript, the editor first prescreens it and sends an acknowledgment to the author. Manuscripts are evaluated by at least three reviewers who are uninformed as to the identity of the author. Manuscripts are evaluated in terms of interest, quality of writing, appropriate documentation of ideas, uniqueness, and needs of the journal. A decision on the manuscript is

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

usually reached within two months. Manuscripts submitted are assumed to be previously unpublished and not under consideration by any other publication. Accepted manuscripts may be edited to promote clarity and to improve organization.

Manuscripts and correspondence regarding editorial matters should be addressed to Dr. Kenney, Editor.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRTE Contact Individuals..... 3 – 4

Guidelines for Authors ..... 5 – 6

Young Children Draw Their Images of Literacy.. 8-34
Roberta A. McKay
Maureen E. Kendrick

A Comparison of Teachers' Knowledge and Use of Content Literacy Strategies..... 35-53
Mary E. Howe
Rich Radcliffe
Bonnie Higginson

Teaching Reading in Inner-City Schools: Teacher Educators Learning from Teachers' Perspectives.. 54-77
Carol Leroy
Mary Cronin

Photo Story Writing: Integrating All Language Modes in Teaching Literacy to Elementary ESL Students..... 78-98
Ping Liu
Richard Parker

Interpretive Comprehension: What The NAEP Results Mean for Teachers..... 99-123
Dale Johnson
Bonnie von Hoff Johnson

Editor's Corner..... 124-126

Book Reviews.....127-133

ISSN 1066-2839

The Reading Professor
1999, 22, (1) 8-34

YOUNG CHILDREN DRAW THEIR IMAGES OF LITERACY

Roberta A. McKay and Maureen E. Kendrick

While much of the focus of primary schooling is on literacy education and teachers' own explicit and implicit images of literacy, we know little about what images children construct about reading and writing in their lives. Literacy researchers such as Graves (1983), Harste, Woodward, and Burke (1984), and Dyson (1997), among others, exemplify a research paradigm that recognizes children as a critical source of information on what literacy is and how literacy develops. Using a social constructivist orientation, we adopt a similar research paradigm, which is related to much of the literacy research conducted over the past two decades (Dyson, 1997, Heath, 1983; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988). However, our focus on young children's images of literacy utilizing children's drawings as a major source of information is unique. Specifically, although a number of authors have advocated collecting children's thoughts and ideas as a valuable research resource (see e.g., Harste, et al., 1984, Kurth-Schai, 1988; Strommen & Mates, 1997), the potential for using children's drawings as a research resource is rarely discussed in the

1997), the potential for using children's drawings as a research resource is rarely discussed in the literature. In this preliminary study, we use children's drawings as a fruitful way to provide opportunities for children to share their images of literacy. Our purpose is to identify the images that young children (Grades 1 to 3) construct of literacy in their lives both inside and outside of school.

Method and Procedure

Our research explores the images of literacy that young children construct in their lives, both inside and outside of school. Forty-eight[1] elementary school children (14 in Grade One, 14 in Grade Two, and 20 in Grade Three) from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds participated in our research project. The school where research was conducted is located in a lower-middle socioeconomic neighborhood. Data collection occurred over a five-month period, from November to March and began with a pilot study involving the 20 Grade Three children.

In small, randomly assigned groups of three or four, the children met with one of the researchers for approximately fifteen minutes to draw pictures of and discuss their ideas about literacy in their lives in school, outside of school, and when they grow up. The sessions began with a group

[1] Parents were asked to sign letters of permission for their children to participate in the study. In total, 48 letters were returned.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

discussion about reading and writing that the children might do inside and outside of school, now and in the future. These initial discussions served as the impetus for the children's drawings. Because our goal was to explore children's images and ideas as evident in their drawings, the questions outlined below were used to guide the interviews rather than rigidly format them.

1. What kind of reading/writing do you do in school/outside of school?
2. Why do you read/write in school/outside of school?
3. Where do you read/write in school/outside of school?
4. How is reading/writing in school both similar and different from reading/writing outside of school?
5. How do you think you will use reading/writing in the future as you grow older?
6. Draw a picture of reading or writing. It can be a picture of reading or writing that you do at home or at school. It can be a picture of reading or writing that you do now or that you think you might do when you're older.

Approximately one week following the group discussion, the children met individually with one of the researchers to explain their drawings. Transcriptions of these interviews were used to verify the researchers' interpretations of the content of the children's drawings (i.e., who and what was in the drawings, when and where the literacy event

or activity took place, and why the children chose to draw what they did).

The method and procedure for data collection outlined above were identical for all three grades with the exclusion of a sharing session that was included in the pilot study with the grade three children. The purpose of the sharing session was to give the children an opportunity to discuss their completed drawings with the members of their group. Although we initially anticipated that having the children share their drawings would yield further information about the their images of literacy, we did not find that it was purposeful for the children or for our research. We therefore chose to exclude this session when working with the Grade One and Two children. The Grade Three data set, however, is included as part of this preliminary research because we found that the drawings yielded rich information about the children's images of literacy, and provided an opportunity for us to view these images across one division (Grades 1 to 3) in a single-school context.

Data Analysis

Our data analysis was based upon three interactive processes: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification (Huberman & Miles, 1994). As Huberman and Miles (1994) point out, these processes are not linear and often occur simultaneously during data analysis. Data reduction and conclusion drawing/verification consisted of

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

various stages of examining the children's drawings to identify images of literacy. For each grade, we categorized the predominant images of literacy according to themes such as home and family, school, and work. These themes were then categorized into sub-themes that included various other elements of literacy that appeared in the drawings (e.g., active engagements with literacy, literacy tools and artifacts, literacy settings, and social interactions). Data display involved developing matrices that enabled us to sort and link the themes and subthemes to identify predominant patterns within and across grades. Both researchers worked together to complete all stages of the data analysis and coding. In addition, classroom teachers involved in the study were asked to complete a simple ranking of their students' literacy learning as high, average, or low. Although in this preliminary study, this information was not sufficient to establish a relationship between the children's images of literacy and their literacy achievement, the information did contribute to our overall interpretations of the differences within and across the three grades

Results

Group Discussions

Grade 1 – The Importance of Family

In the small group discussions, the central place of family members in relation to literacy learning, both at home and at school, was a predominant

theme for the Grade 1 children. The Grade 1 children's discussions also suggest that special occasions provide a genuine purpose for writing activities at home and that family members provide a genuine audience. It is interesting, however, that while the family still figures prominently in school literacy, the talk of these children also suggests a view of school literacy activities as rules and routines that include competition and evaluation. For example, this particular group of children talked about school literacy in terms of number of pages and number of books read; tests; learning words; getting checkmarks, stamps, and stickers; and earning certificates to go to McDonald's. Surprisingly, references to being read to for enjoyment, by either parents or teachers, were absent from the small group discussions.

Grade 2 – Literacy Milestones

During the group discussions, the Grade 2 children expressed many ideas around the central theme of what mature literacy would involve. These "literacy milestones" included being able to "handwrite," "read more books," "read harder books like chapter books," "spell bigger words," and "write longer stories." The children also talked about being able to read to others and help younger siblings or classmates learn to read and write as other important milestones on the way to mature literacy. In addition, the ideas the children presented suggest that genuine audiences and purposes are essential to meaningful literacy activities. Specifically, the children viewed literacy

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

as a learning and sense-making activity, while also being aware of the skills they were learning. For example, Trisha focused on how, through writing "you can learn about capitals and periods, you can learn about words; how to spell words; and you memorize stuff." She also said, "I like writing notes and writing letters and writing about different kind of animals and nature and things that you don't know about yet, and then you find out and you try to learn more about it." The children also talked about "sounding out" and going "back where you were" and going "ahead" and then "back to the words" as reading strategies they knew "if you got stuck on a word."

Grade 3 – Literacy in Expanding Contexts

In the small group settings, the Grade 3 children talked frequently about writing at home and school. While the family still provided an audience and purpose for writing at home, the merging of home and school writing activities was evident in the children's discussions of "practising writing stories," at home, "recopying stories" to give to relatives, "doing homework," "writing in math," and "writing on tests." Discussions about reading at home and at school provide evidence of the children's growing sense of independence as readers and writers. Reading "chapter" books was again mentioned as a milestone on the road to mature literacy, as was having private places to read (e.g., the bedroom), and reading a wide range of materials including fairy tales, "scary stories," the newspaper, the dictionary, the "Book of

Knowledge", and the Bible. Interestingly, many children also expressed an awareness of who was "able" and "not able" to read, and made specific reference to younger siblings who could not read and classmates who attended a special reading class for part of the afternoon. In general, these children had a strong sense that literacy helps you to learn and they saw this as important for the future.

Individual Interviews and Drawings

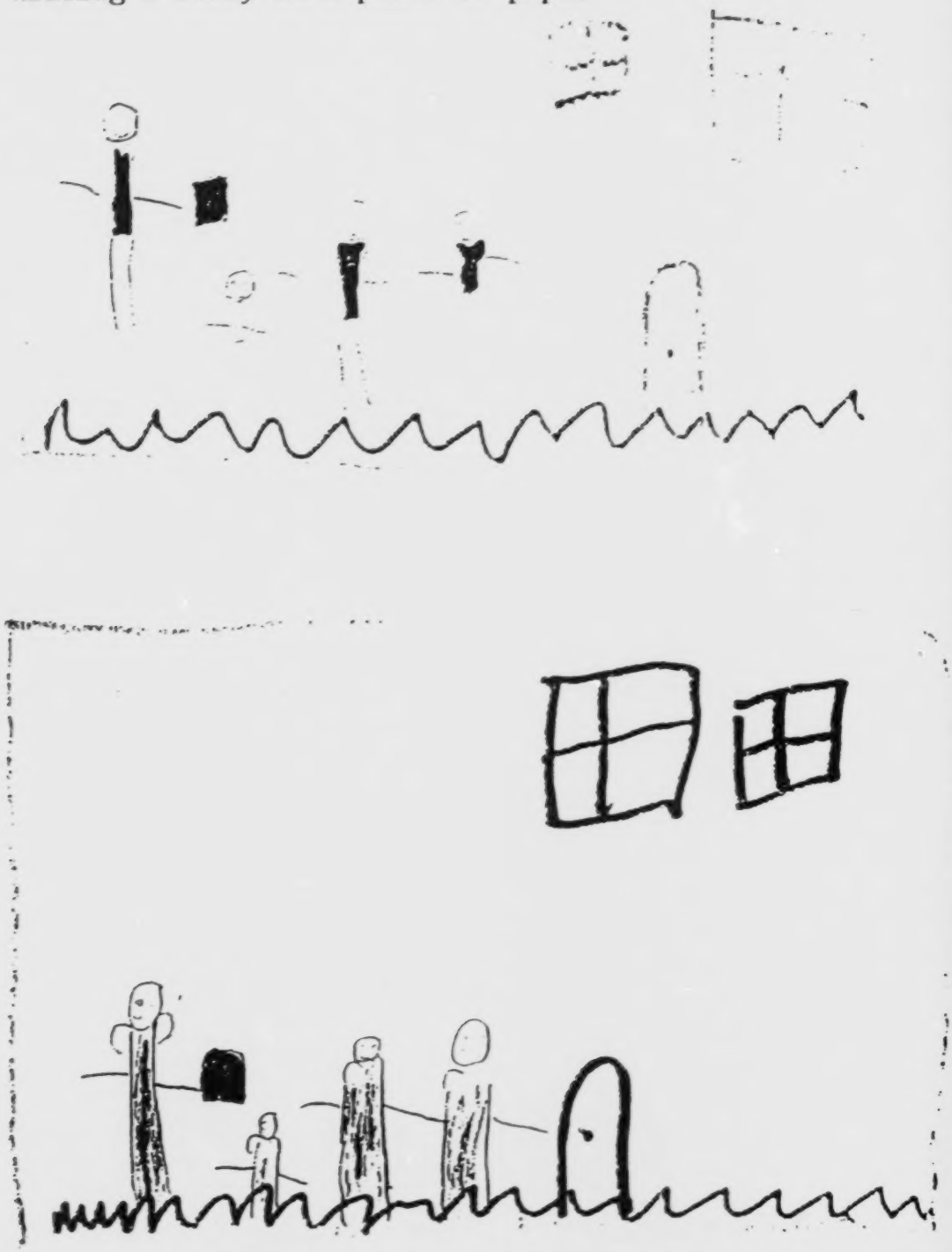
Grade 1 – Literacy as Embedded in Family

Similar to the group discussions, one of the most predominant images apparent in the Grade 1 children's drawings was family as the focal point of literacy. Of the fourteen drawings, six contain figures such as mother, father, and siblings. Many of these drawings were also situated within the context of the home. Moreover, the children who drew these pictures talked explicitly about reading with their mothers, sending messages and letters to relatives, and listening to stories read by older brothers and sisters. The group discussion supports the idea of family members as a known audience for literacy activities. Robert, for instance, in explaining his picture, talked about his brother reading a story to the whole family. His picture shows four figures, one of whom is holding a book. Robert identified the figures as himself and his three siblings (see Figure 1). Maintaining emotional ties with absent family members, as an important motivation for literacy, was also apparent in the

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Figure 1

Writing a story on a piece of paper



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

group discussions. Brandi in particular talked about writing a letter to her dad, who did not live in the same household and worked for long periods outside of the city. In her drawing, she drew a pencil and a letter that reads, "Dear Dad How are you doing Love Brandi."

Two other children's drawings that include the theme of family were designed as "books." One child made a book to give to her mother and the other made a "book about books" she wanted to read in the future. In the first example, Victoria wrote a poem to her mom. In talking about her drawing she made reference to the hearts on the front and then explained, "Now we're going into the middle. Let me read this to you: 'I like hearts. Hearts like me. I like me.'" Victoria appeared to have a clear sense of audience and this was demonstrated in the immediacy she placed on giving the book to her mother, who at the time lived in a separate residence. Specifically, unlike the other children who agreed to let us borrow their pictures until a later date, Victoria was adamant that she have the original book that day to give to her mother.

Amy, who drew the "book about books," explained, "When I grow up, I'm going to read a book about scary dinosaurs and tornadoes and about Valentine's and dogs." Her purpose for producing the book was clearly different from that communicated by Victoria. The cover of her book includes a dinosaur, a book with the message: "I Love You Mom and DaD," a dog, two hearts, and a

tornado. Inside the book, Amy drew herself with a book in her hands, her name, and again included a dog, a tornado, and a Valentine heart. Interestingly, both Victoria and Amy demonstrated an awareness of the physical format of a book (e.g., front, middle, and back). Special occasions such as Christmas, birthdays, Easter, and Valentine's Day were mentioned in the group discussions as other opportunities to communicate with family members. Interestingly, we also noted that the letter produced by Brandi and the books produced by Victoria and Amy reflected elements of greeting card language.

Human figures appear in all of the Grade 1 children's drawings, with the exception of one. In addition to the family members discussed earlier, these include the child with friends and the child alone. Literacy tools (e.g., pencils, blank papers, books, computers) and artifacts (e.g., letters, stories, environmental print) are also depicted, although infrequently. Where literacy tools do appear, they typically are drawn separate from the child. For example, in one drawing, a boy portrays his brother holding a book at arm's length. In Brandi's drawing, the paper and pencil are suspended in the picture beside the image of herself. Other examples of literacy tools are a drawing of a child sitting at a computer and drawings of books. Literacy artifacts in the previous examples include the books produced by Victoria and Amy, and the letter composed by Brandi. Additional instances of literacy artifacts are labels for family members and

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

pets, letters of the alphabet, and spelling words on a piece of paper.

Grade 2 – Literacy in a Range of Settings

In examining the Grade 2 children's drawings, we found that one of the most apparent elements was the range of settings in which they portrayed literacy activities. These include singing with the music teacher at her house, acting on a theatrical stage, working in the Capital City Tower, reading at school, at home, at the beach, and in a tent. This variety of settings would appear to reflect this group of children's experiences with literacy both inside and outside of school.

In the picture involving the music teacher, Jodi included a drawing of herself actively engaged in writing. In the picture, she is sitting at a desk, holding a red-tipped pen. This illustration of the act of writing, which was not portrayed in any of the Grade 1 students' drawings, is perhaps an indication that Jodi sees herself as a writer. Ashley's drawing of acting on a theatrical stage, specifically, the balcony scene from Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, communicates her understanding that a play is an enactment of literacy (see Figure 2). She pointed out, "I like Romeo and Juliet because there's all sorts of parts in there. There's happy parts, and there's sad parts, and there's mad parts and stuff. I have drawn the part where Juliet is standing up by her bedroom door — and Romeo is down here saying, 'Juliet!'" She then indicates where she has drawn hearts around Juliet's head.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Figure 2

The balcony scene of Juliet and Romeo

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

because, "Romeo and Juliet are in love." Jodi also talked about going to the theatre with her grandmother, who is involved in directing plays.

Kenny's drawing of the Capital City Tower provides a glimpse into his understanding of literacy within the world of work. His tower includes numerous windows, behind which he has drawn offices with small figures working at computers. During our interview, he talked about visiting the Capital City Tower where his father had worked at one time. His perception of literacy in this particular work environment was as follows: "And they sit in their offices, and they typewrite the bill, and they write to the bank, and they have this little truck, and then they deliver it to whoever made it. This little truck goes to the bank, and then he hauls all the money out." He also talked about his father being fired from his job and how this had affected the family, which may be an indication of why the Capital City Tower was such a prominent image for Kenny.

Some of the Grade 2 children also drew literacy activities in or around their homes. Unlike the Grade 1 children, however, family members were not prominent figures in their drawings. Other human figures in the Grade 2 sample include the children's illustrations of themselves actively engaged in reading. In these five instances, the children drew figures holding open books in their hands, two of which were depicted in home settings and three of which were in the school settings. These examples of active engagement with reading

may indicate that several of these students are developing a growing concept of self as independent readers. This concept is also supported by the fact that in approximately half of the pictures, the child is the only figure drawn. An additional element in these drawings that was not evident in the Grade 1 students' drawings is the representation of text on the pages of open books.

In comparison to the Grade 1 students, the Grade 2 students also included in their drawings more literacy tools such as desks, computers, chalkboards, clocks, books, papers, and pencils and literacy artifacts such as labels for book titles, a stage banner, messages, and squiggles representing text on a chalkboard and computer screen. One drawing in particular is comprised of a complex assortment of literacy tools and artifacts. In her detailed drawing, Trisha included several computers with images and text on the screen; a stack of three books labelled with the titles *Modey Dik*, *Cat in the hat*, and *Wut is that Noys*; a picture of herself reading *My littl Poney*; two chalkboards, one with text and a drawing of a dog, and one with the number "36" represented in tens and ones; two clocks, one with a face and one digital; and her teacher standing beside a desk that has a pencil and a stack of papers on it. When asked about her drawing, Trisha explained that the books she included are her "favourites" and that she has trouble reading time on clocks that have faces instead of just numbers.

Grade 3 – Literacy as Direct Engagement

In the Grade 3 children's drawings, images of direct engagement in reading and writing were most predominant. Nineteen such images appear in the Grade 3 children's drawings, compared to five images portrayed in the Grade 2 children's drawings. Active engagements in reading and writing in the Grade 3 children's drawings include images of holding a book, writing a story, selecting a book, and teaching someone else to read or write. Settings for reading and writing were as varied as the home, library, school, and public places such as a space and science centre." Clearly, these Grade 3 children view literacy as part of their lives both inside and outside of school. It is interesting that while fifteen of the twenty Grade 3 children's drawings contain human and human-like figures (e.g., children, a teacher, a librarian, and aliens[2]), there are no drawings in which the children identified any of the figures as family members.

Mary's drawing is an example of literacy as teaching. Her picture is divided into two frames, one showing a girl teaching a red alien to write, and the other showing a girl teaching a blue alien to read. Mary explained her drawing by saying, "I was in space, and stuff, and I was telling one how to

[2] The inclusion of aliens in some of the drawings is likely a result of a discussion about "someone who doesn't know about reading and writing" that transpired during one of the group interviews. A wall mural of an alien also appears outside of the library door in the school where research was conducted.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

read, and one alien how to write." Mary's two aliens each have a speech bubble above them. One speech bubble reads, "writing is fun" and the other reads, " I say I love reading." All of the figures in Mary's drawing are smiling and Mary commented that the aliens are "having fun." The Grade 3 children's drawings contain five other instances of speech bubbles with similar expressions of positive attitudes toward reading and writing. Positive attitudes toward literacy were prevalent in the drawings and individual interview comments of the vast majority of the children in this study.

In comparison, Alison's drawing depicts literacy as a visit to the public library. She explained that her drawing is "a picture of a library, and the librarian putting the books back, and the little girl read the book." Alison displayed an extraordinary understanding of the organization and procedures of a library. She included in her drawing and was able to explain that there are different shelves for different types of books: "It's going to be for fairy tales, and this one's going to be for a little bit of facts, and then there's going to be one for adults." She added that in the library, there is a desk and "people need a library card." As Alison talked about her drawing, she explained that her mom takes her to the library once in awhile.

While in Alison's drawing the librarian figures prominently as a purveyor of literacy, Della's drawing of DEAR ("drop everything and read") time in school has a strong image of the teacher as a purveyor of literacy. Her drawing shows an adult

figure at a blackboard and four children, all holding books and sitting at desks. Della identified the adult figure as Miss M., her teacher. The drawing has two blackboards and Della explained that the teacher writes their spelling test on one and their names on the other. This drawing is also another example of the Grade 3 children's portrayals of direct involvement with acts of reading and writing.

Similar to the Grade 2 children, the Grade 3 children included in their drawings a variety of literacy tools and artifacts. Once again, as with the images of direct engagement in literacy, there was a dramatic increase between Grade 2 and Grade 3 in the frequency of literacy tools and artifacts that appear in the drawings. Drawings of literacy tools such as pencils increased from 2 instances to 8 instances and drawings of books increased from 9 instances to 47 instances between the Grade 2 and Grade 3 samples. Other literacy tools that appear in the Grade 3 children's drawings include desks, papers, and one computer. Literacy artifacts also appear in the Grade 3 children's drawings far more frequently than in the Grade 2 children's drawings. Of the books that the children drew in their pictures, many contain squiggles representing the text contained in books, and two have actual words written on the pages. Drawings of stories being written also consist of squiggles representing the text. Carl's drawing, for example, shows a torso with a hand holding a very large pencil. The figure in the drawing is writing a story on a piece of paper (see Figure 3). The text on the piece of paper

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Figure 3

Robert and his three siblings

begins, "Once upon a time." Labels for book titles are evident within the drawings as are a number of examples of environmental print including signs such as "Space and Science Centre," "The Library," and a name plate on the librarian's desk. The Grade 3 children's drawings also include images that reflect their awareness of genre, for example fairy tales, the Bible, and information books; their awareness of textual elements such as "Once upon a time" and "The End"; and their awareness of authorship in the example "By God."

Discussion

Although the group discussion provided the backdrop for the individual drawings, the children clearly moved well beyond the ideas and images generated in the group setting and produced unique personal images of literacy in their drawings. Much of the following discussion, therefore, focuses on the themes and patterns that were evident in the children's drawings.

In examining all of the drawings in the collection, several clear and predominant themes were apparent across the three grades. The images in the drawings show a major shift in focus in the child's relationship to literacy, from family as the agent of literacy in the Grade 1 children's drawings, to self as the agent of literacy in the Grade 3 children's drawings. In the Grade 1 children's drawings, the most evident relationship depicted is the child within the family structure, which was also

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

the most prevalent theme in the group discussions. Literacy activities are nested within the family relationships and drawings of family members were the most common image, with no other adult figures portrayed. In contrast, only one of the Grade 2 children's drawings includes family members and in the Grade 3 sample, drawings of family members are totally absent. Other adult figures do appear in the Grade 2 and 3 children's drawings including the children's teachers, a public librarian, and private music teacher. The child alone or with other children was a prevalent image in the drawings produced by the Grade 2 and 3 children, while this was not a significant image for the Grade 1 children. Instead, for the Grade 1 children, the family context appeared to act as a mediator between the child and literacy. For the Grade 2 and 3 children, their drawings of themselves and other children depict a more direct relationship with literacy.

There is evidence in the drawings produced by the Grade 2 and 3 children of their growing relationship with literacy in contexts outside of the family relationship. While most of the Grade 1 children's drawings had as their setting the home, the Grade 2 children's drawings have settings as varied as the music teacher's house, the school, the beach, a tent, the Capital City Tower, and a stage. The Grade 3 children's drawings also portray literacy in a variety of settings including the library, outdoors, at home, in school, in a bedroom, and at a space and science centre.

The children's growing sense of efficacy as readers and writers is particularly evident in portrayals of self in direct engagement in literacy. In the Grade 1 children's drawings, there were very few drawings that involve direct engagement in literacy activities. Only one drawing shows a child actually reading an open book and one shows a child working at a computer. As noted previously, there was a marked increase across the three grades in the number of examples of direct engagements with literacy from two in Grade 1, to five in Grade 2, to nineteen in Grade 3. Surprisingly, the Grade 1 and 2 children's portrayals of direct engagement with literacy included reading almost exclusively, whereas the Grade 3 children's portrayals included both reading and writing.

The list of literacy tools and artifacts included in the Grade 2 children's drawings indicates their developing sense of the complexities of literacy. While literacy tools and artifacts appear infrequently in the Grade 1 children's drawings, there are far more included in the Grade 2 children's drawings. The increase in the appearance of literacy tools and artifacts in the Grade 3 children's drawings in comparison to the Grade 2 children's drawings is dramatic and may be an indication of the children's growing experience with literacy. Interestingly, many of the Grade 3 children expressed their "literacy stance" (Roskos, 1988) through messages embedded within the literacy artifacts (e.g., thought balloons that read, "I like reading" or "Writing is fun"). The

communication of a literacy stance is also evidence that as children acquire more experiences with literacy, they develop their own attitudes, perceptions, beliefs, and understandings about literacy. Overall, it is noteworthy that during the group discussions, the vast majority of children expressed positive attitudes toward literacy learning at home and at school.

Implications

Our purpose in this paper was to identify young children's images of literacy, inside and outside of school. These preliminary findings reinforce the notion that children do construct their own images of literacy. The more awareness that parents and teachers have about children's images of literacy, the more they can promote continuity between literacy learning at home and literacy learning at school. The functions and purposes of literacy can be extended within the home and the school by ensuring that young children are exposed to reading and writing for a variety of purposes and audiences. While a number of researchers have recognized the importance of young children reading and writing for authentic purposes and audiences, we believe that greater continuity between children's home and school literacy learning can be achieved in the following ways:

1. The importance that young children place on special occasions. As a context for meaningful literacy activities, occasions such

as birthdays, Valentine's Day, and Christmas provide opportunities for children to read and write for authentic purposes. Teachers and parents should seek to maximize and create other such opportunities for authentic reading and writing. Important events in the home, school, and community can provide meaningful contexts for children to send and receive messages (e.g., invitations and thank you notes), plan parties, and request information.

2. Daily literacy routines can be extended by involving children in activities such as reading recipes or instructions, writing letters to friends and family, or discussing information from newspapers, magazines, brochures, and pamphlets. A wide range of reading materials in both the home and the school is critical if young children are to understand the variety of purposes for which people read. In addition, the importance of highlighting the writing process for young children cannot be overemphasized as our preliminary finding indicate that writing was not as evident as reading in the Grade 1 and 2 children's images of literacy. Young children need to be made aware that reading and writing are closely connected. Specifically, all examples of reading material can also be examined as examples of written language.

3. The significance of siblings and other family members to young children's literacy

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

development was also strongly evident in the children's images of literacy. Encouraging younger and older siblings to read together, both at home and at school, would provide another context for meaningful literacy activities. Teachers and school administrators may also want to explore unique classroom configurations that involve not only siblings but extended family members such as cousins as well.

Conclusion

The findings from this study of young children's images of literacy are consistent with other sociocultural approaches to literacy research. The young children in our study appear to construct their initial images of literacy essentially as a result of their literacy experiences and interactions within the home. The family has been identified by a number of researchers as the primary site of the social construction of literacy for children (Harste, et al., 1984; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988; Teale, 1986). Clearly, the images of literacy constructed by this group of children support the notion that it is within the family that personal and social meanings of literacy begin.

Solsken (1993) suggests that children's literacy learning is not only connected to the family but also to school enactments and definitions of literacy. In her research, changes to children's orientations to literacy in grade one and two involve differences in

how literacy activities are regulated and the degree to which these activities are teacher- or child-initiated. She asserts that children continue to construct and enact their orientations toward literacy through their relations with adults and other children. In our study, the images of literacy constructed by the children in their drawings show dramatic evidence of the role of siblings, peers, teachers, and other adults in providing a social and cultural forum in which children negotiate their meanings of literacy. The children's drawings appear to provide evidence of a progression from family to other adults and children as the primary context for the social construction of literacy. The images of literacy contained in the drawings also appear to reflect that what children know about literacy includes a sense of themselves and others as participants in particular literacy transactions. Although this is a preliminary study, we are left feeling that children's drawings have unrealized potential for helping us further explore the sociocultural nature of literacy development at home and at school.

References

Dyson, A. Haas (1997). *Writing superheroes: Contemporary childhood, popular culture, and classroom literacy*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Graves, D. (1983). *Writing: Teachers and children at work*. Exeter, NH: Heinemann.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Harste, J. C., Woodward, V. A., & Burke, C. L. (1984). *Language stories and literacy lessons.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

Huberman, A. M., & Miles, M. B. (1994). Data management and analysis methods. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 428-444). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Kurth-Schai, R. (1988). Collecting the thoughts of children: A Delphic approach. *Journal of Research and Development in Education, 21*(3), 53-59.

Roskos, K. (1988). Literacy at work in play. *Reading Teacher, 41*(6), 562-566.

Schickedanz, J. (1986). *More than ABC's: The early stages of reading and writing.* Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Solsken, J. W. (1993). *Literacy, gender, & work in families and in schools.* Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing.

Strommen, L. T., & Mates, B. F. (1997). What readers do: Young children's ideas about the nature of reading. *The Reading Teacher, 51*(2), 98-107.

Taylor, D., & Dorsey-Gaines, C. (1988). *Growing up literate: Learning from inner-city families.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Teale, W. H. (1984). Home background and young children's literacy development. In H. Goelman, A. A. Oberg, & F. Smith (Eds.), *Awakening to literacy* (pp. 173-206). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Drs. Roberta A. McKay and Maureen E. Kendrick may be reached at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

The Reading Professor
1999, 22, (1) 35-53

A COMPARISON OF TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE AND USE OF CONTENT LITERACY STRATEGIES

Mary E. Howe, Rich Radcliffe and
Bonnie Higginson

Introduction

Content literacy instruction, and specifically content reading strategies, have most often been the concern and responsibility of content area teachers in middle and high schools (McGee & Richgels, 1985; Moore, Readence, & Rickelman, 1993; Piccolo, 1987, Ryder & Graves, 1998). Because informative text has traditionally been perceived as too difficult for students in elementary school, there has been a lack of content literacy instruction in the early grades (Alvermann & Boothby, 1982; Armbruster, Anderson, & Ostertag, 1989; Avery & Graves, 1997; Flood, 1986; Williamson, 1996). However, this absence of content literacy instruction in the early grades is unfortunate, because many students in elementary schools regularly read content area texts (Moore, et al., 1993). McKenna and Robinson (1990) justify early content literacy, because students in kindergarten through third grade "are equipped to advance their understanding (of expository text) through literacy

activities, provided that reading materials are commensurate with ability, . . ." (p. 186).

A variety of instructional strategies that enhance content literacy have been introduced to practitioners during the past 20 years (Tierney, Readence, & Dishner, 1990). Many, if not most, of the strategies have undergone scrutiny through carefully designed research studies and are accepted as techniques that effectively enhance comprehension and/or vocabulary development in the content areas. Researchers, including Manning and Manning (1995a & b), suggest that students in early elementary grades should be engaged in numerous literacy strategies and activities that enhance students' comprehension in content areas. Olson and Gee (1991) support the notion of content literacy instruction for elementary students, stating that "young children need to develop proficiency with simple expository texts in order to keep pace with the ever increasing number of subject area textbooks they will experience now and as they progress through school" (p.298).

Because the shift from learning to read (usually in narrative text) to reading to learn (expository text) is evident and expected in approximately the fourth grade (Duffelmeyer, 1994; Williamson, 1996), there is a fundamental need for primary teachers (K-3) to possess the conceptual framework to prepare students for reading expository text, and to be cognizant of and implement appropriate, effective content literacy instruction (Herber & Herber, 1993; Williamson,

1996). Without the content literacy experiences, students are likely to experience a high degree of frustration when they encounter content text in later school years.

A recent study (Howe, Grierson, & Richmond, 1997) concentrating on content literacy instruction in the primary grades examined primary grade teachers' (grades 1-3) familiarity, use, and perceived application of content literacy strategies by the Content Area Reading Strategies (CARS) Survey. Fifty-eight teachers were surveyed to determine the extent that they were familiar with, implemented, and recommended content area reading strategies. The findings of this study indicated that teachers were familiar with, implemented, and recommended most of the 42 content reading strategies included on the questionnaire.

The present study is a replication of the previous research, which was conducted in Mississippi during the first year of statewide educational reform. The current study is conducted in Kentucky where educational reform is in the eighth year.

The Present Research

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent that content literacy strategies are implemented in the early grades (K-3) and to survey teachers' recommendations about using these strategies in the classroom. The research focused on

teachers who have a level of literacy-practice knowledge that is sufficient to recognize various literacy strategies based upon commonly used terminology in the field of literacy. The purpose of this study was also to replicate the initial study. The research questions included in the original study were addressed:

1. To what extent are primary teachers (grades K-3) familiar with content reading strategies?
2. How frequently do teachers use specific content reading strategies?
3. Which content reading strategies are perceived as most useful by primary teachers?
4. Do years of teaching experience, grade level experience, workshop attendance, and content reading course enrollment have an association with the level of familiarity, utility, and perceived applicability of content reading strategies?

Method

Subjects

Fifty-four teachers from two rural districts in western Kentucky completed the Content Area Reading Strategies (CARS) Questionnaire (Howe, Grierson, & Richmond, 1997). The respondents included teachers of kindergarten (n=22), first grade (n=6), second grade (n=8), third grade (n=6), kindergarten/first grade (n=7), first/second grade (n=2), and second/third grade (n=2) teachers. A

relatively high proportion of Kindergarten teachers responded in spite of the researchers' attempt to obtain even sampling across K-3.

Instrumentation

The CARS questionnaire was used to collect teacher demographic data (years of teaching experience, grade level taught, years teaching the specific grade level, attendance at content reading workshops, & previous enrollment in content reading courses) and teacher responses regarding familiarity, use, and perceived application of content literacy strategies. The CARS questionnaire was administered individually in approximately 20 minutes.

Procedures

Letters requesting permission to administer the questionnaire were sent to five principals in two school districts. The letter requested that the surveys be evenly distributed across K-3 grades. After receiving consent to distribute the questionnaires, the researchers personally contacted school principals to clarify any questions that participating K-3 teachers might have. Questionnaires and instructions for completing the questionnaire were distributed to the participating teachers (grades K-3). Completed questionnaires were collected over a 3-week period.

Results

Responses from 54 participants were analyzed. Data values for independent and dependent variables were computed by applying the techniques used in the original study. Response scores were totaled for each of the three columns of the CARS instrument to create the familiarity, frequency, and applicability dependent variables scores. Responses were coded for the independent variables based upon group membership:

1. Years of teaching experience (less than 5 years, 6-10 years, over 20 years)
2. Years of experience at current grade level (less than 5 years, 6-10 years, over 20 years)
3. Content area workshop attendance (yes or no)
4. Content reading course (yes or no)

The data were analyzed using frequency distribution and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) techniques.

Frequency analyses revealed the percentage of responses for the familiarity, use, and applicability variables. Table 1, Frequency Responses for Content Literacy Strategies, presents the percentage of respondents who were familiar with the 42 content literacy strategies. Additional data include the frequency that these strategies are practiced and the respondent's recommendation for using the strategies.

Table 2 presents results of four ANOVAs that tested for differences between the dependent

variable of familiarity with content reading strategies and the four independent variables, which include teaching experience, experience at current grade level, content area workshop attendance, and content reading course. A statistically significant difference, $F(4, 49) = 3.19$, $p < .05$, was found between groups for the teaching experience at grade level variable. Teachers with less than five years experience appear to be more familiar with content area reading strategies than teachers with between five to 10 years of experience and teachers with over 20 years experience. The ANOVA results do not reveal a statistically significant relationship between familiarity and teacher experience, experience at current grade level, workshop attendance, or graduate course work.

The ANOVAs (see Table 3) that tested for differences between the variable of use of content reading strategy and the four independent variables did not find statistically significant differences. These findings do not provide evidence of an association between the use of content literacy strategies and teacher experience, experience at current grade level, workshop attendance, or graduate course work.

The results listed in Table 4 for the final set of ANOVAs, also revealed no statistically significant differences between the strategy recommendation variable and the four independent variables. It appears that the level of recommendations for the use of content literacy strategies may not be linked to levels of teaching experience, experience at

Table 1

Frequency Responses for Content Literacy Strategies

Strategy	Familiarity	How often would you use this strategy?				Would you recommend using this strat			
	Yes	Often	Seldom	Never		Often	Seldom	Never	
Prior knowledge	100.0	100.0	----	----		100.0	----	----	
Enrichment activities	100.0	90.7	9.3	----		92.6	7.4	----	
Oral conflict	66.7	44.4	20.4	1.9		48.1	18.5	33.3	
Semantic mapping	66.7	16.7	35.2	14.8		33.3	31.5	3.7	
Discussion forums	63.0	29.6	25.9	7.4		35.2	24.1	3.7	
KWL three-level guide	63.0	33.3	27.8	1.9		46.3	14.8	1.9	
Vocabulary cloze	61.1	22.2	33.3	5.6		27.8	33.3	----	
Advanced organizer	57.4	22.2	25.9	9.3		37.0	16.7	3.7	
List-Group-Label	55.6	24.1	29.6	----		35.2	20.4	----	
Surveying text	55.6	27.8	16.7	1.1		35.2	18.5	1.9	
Self reporting	53.7	20.4	29.6	3.7		20.4	29.6	5.6	
Inserted questions	51.9	25.4	20.4	5.6		27.8	24.1	----	
Use of text structure	51.9	24.1	20.4	7.4		31.5	20.4	----	
Pattern guide	48.1	31.5	16.7	3.7		33.3	16.7	1.9	
Structured overview	44.4	14.8	20.4	11.1		18.5	25.9	1.9	
Morphemic analysis	38.9	7.4	20.4	11.1		16.7	16.7	5.6	
Meaning negotiation	35.2	13.0	16.7	5.6		14.8	16.7	3.7	
Reciprocal teaching	33.3	9.3	16.7	7.4		18.5	14.8	----	

45

42

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Table 2

Analysis of Variance for Familiarity with Content Strategy
ANOVA 1 - Teaching Experience

Source	d f	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Prob
Between groups	1	293.54	73.39	1.46	0.23
Within groups		492468.38	50.38		
Total	532761.93	52.11			

ANOVA 2 - Experience at Grade Level

Source	Sum of	Mean	F	F	Standard	Standard
Between groups	4	571.79	142.95	3.19	0.02	
Within groups		492190.14	44.70			
Total	532761.93	52.11				
Group 1		1474.21	3.42	0.91	*	*
Group 2		1466.93	7.67	2.05		
Group 3		6	69.17	2.31	0.95	
Group 4		1371.77	7.81	2.17		
Group 5		765.43	9.25	3.50		

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ANOVA 3 - Workshop Attendance

Source	d f	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Prob
Between groups	1	137 24	137 24	2 72	0 11
Within groups	52	2624 68	50 47		
Total	53	2761 93			

47

ANOVA 4 - Graduate Coursework

Source	d f	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Prob
Between groups	1	166.25	166.25	3.33	0.07
Within groups	52	2595.68	49.92		
Total	53	2761.93			

44 BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Table 3

Analysis of Variance for Utility with Content Strategy

ANOVA 5 - Teaching Experience

Source	d f	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Prob.
Between groups	4	982 18	245 55	0.70	0 59
Within groups	49	17113 15	349 25		
Total	53	18095 33			

ANOVA 6 - Experience at Grade Level

Source	d f	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Prob.
Between groups	4	2184.41	546.10	1.68	0.17
Within groups	49	15910.93	324.71		
Total	53	18095 33			

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ANOVA 7 - Workshop Attendance

Sourced f	Sum of Squares	MeanFF Squares	Ratio	Prob
Between groups	1184.23	1184.23	3.63	0.06
Within groups	52	16988.53		
Total	53	18172.76		

ANOVA 8 - Graduate Coursework

Sourced f.	Sum of Squares	MeanFF Squares	Ratio	Prob
Between groups	1177.43	1177.43	3.60	0.06
Within groups	52	16995.33	326.83	
Total	53	18095.33		

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Table 4

Analysis of Variance for Perceived Applicability with Content Strategy

ANOVA 9 - Teaching Experience

Source	d.f.	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	Prob
Between groups	4	1437.74	359.43	0.97	0.43
Within groups	49	18157.02	370.55		
Total	53	19594.76			

ANOVA 10 - Experience at Grade Level

Source	d.f.	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	Prob.
Between groups	4	2696.81	674.20	1.95	0.11
Within groups	49	16897.95	344.85		
Total	53	19594.76			

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ANOVA 11 - Workshop Attendance

Source	d.f.	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	Prob
Between groups	1	1086.17	1086.17	3.02	0.08
Within groups	52	18703.93	359.69		
Total	53	19790.09			

ANOVA 12 - Graduate Coursework

Source	d.f.	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	Prob.
Between groups	1	1037.08	1037.08	2.87	0.09
Within groups	52	18753.01	360.63		
Total	53	19790.09			

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

current grade level, workshop attendance, or graduate course work.

Discussion

Primary teachers are familiar with content-based literacy strategies. The results suggest that a majority of the respondents are familiar with 32 of the 42 strategies. All teachers reported being familiar with content literacy strategies that focus on prior knowledge, enrichment activities, phonics, and prediction. Statistical analysis indicates an association between familiarity with content literacy strategies and experience at grade level. Specifically, teachers with less than five years experience appear to be more familiar with content area literacy strategies than teachers with between five and 10 years of experience and those with over 20 years of experience. A possible explanation for these findings may be that teacher preparation and professional development programs have recently been emphasizing content literacy strategies. It should be noted that the Kentucky Education Reform Act was implemented in the early 1990s, which might help to explain why new teachers had higher familiarity with content literacy strategies than teachers within 5-10 years and over 20 years service groups. This reasoning fails to explain why new teacher familiarity scores did not exceed those of teachers in the 11-20 year service range. Further research might be directed at the impact of the

Kentucky Education Reform Act, which includes standards for both new and experienced teachers.

The findings that are presented in Table 1, Frequency Responses for Content Literacy Strategies, reveal that teachers implement a wide variety of content-based literacy strategies. For 27 of the 42 strategies, teachers reported using the strategy often. Although teachers are very familiar with and implement many of the 42 strategies, a majority of the teachers offered their highest recommendations for only 15 strategies. The ANOVA results in tables 2-4 suggest that teaching experience, grade level experience, workshop attendance, and content reading course enrollment are not associated with the perceived level of utility and perceived applicability of content literacy strategies.

The findings of the current study regarding use, application, and recommendations of strategies are generally consistent with the original study. The present study (Table 2, ANOVA 2) also confirmed an association between familiarity and years of experience at the current grade level. Other effects that were identified in the original study were not confirmed by the present study.

As described in the initial study, teachers who reported familiarity with many of the strategies may not be incorporating them in the classroom. Since the CARS instrument is a self-reporting tool, actual classroom observations may be beneficial to further investigate the use and application of content literacy strategies in the primary grades. Structured interviews with teachers may

provide insight into the decision-making involved in selecting specific content strategies for use in the primary classroom. Further research is necessary to determine which content literacy strategies are recommended for the primary grades. Findings from the current study suggest that teachers in western Kentucky are familiar with and using content literacy instructional strategies. Results of the current study may direct refinements in teacher training, effective literacy instruction, and professional development within the scope of broad-based education reform.

References

Alvermann, D. E., & Boothby, P. R. (1982). Text differences: Children's perceptions at the transition stage in reading. *Reading Teacher, 36*(3), 298-302.

Armbruster, B. B., Anderson, T. H., & Ostertag, J. (1989). Teaching text structure to improve reading and writing. *Reading Teacher, 43*(2), 130-137.

Avery, P. G., & Graves, M. F. (1997). Scaffolding: Young learners' reading of social studies text. 10-14.

Duffelmeyer, F. A. (1994). Effective anticipation guide statements for learning from expository prose. *Journal of Reading, 37*(6), 452-457.

Flood, J. (1986). The text, the student, and the teacher: Learning from exposition in middle schools. *Reading Teacher, 39*(8), 784-791.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Herber, H. L., & Herber, J. N. (1993). *Teaching in the content areas with reading, writing, and reasoning.* Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Howe, M. E., Grierson, S. T., & Richmond, M. G. (1997). A comparison of teachers' knowledge use of content reading strategies in the primary grades. *Reading Research and Instruction, 36*(4), 305-324.

Manning, M., & Manning, Gary. (1995). Teaching reading and writing. Literature in the content areas. *Teaching PreK-8, 26*(3), 110-111.

McGee, L. M., & Richgels, D. J. (1985). Teaching expository text structure to elementary students. *Reading Teacher, 38*(8), 739-748

McKenna, M. C., & Robinson, R. D. (1993). *Teaching through text: A content literacy approach to content area reading.* New York & London: Longman.

McKenna, M. C., & Robinson, R. D. (1990). Content literacy: A definition and implications. *Journal of Reading, 34*(3) 184-186.

Olson, M. W., & Gee, T. C. (1991). Content reading instruction in the primray grades: Perceptions and strategies. *The Reading Teacher, 45*(4), 298-307.

Manning, M., & Manning, G. (1995a). Literature in the content areas. *Teaching PreK-8, 26*(3), 110-111.

Manning, M., & Manning, G. (1995b). Reading and writing in the content areas. Teaching reading and writing. *Teaching PreK-8, 26*(1), 152-153.

McGee, L. M., & Richgels, D. J. (1985). Teaching expository text structure to elementary students. *Reading Teacher, 38*(8), 739-748.

Moore, D. W., Readence, J. E., & Rickelman, R. J. (1983). Approaches to content area reading instruction. *Journal of Reading, 26*(5), 397-402.

Piccolo, J. A. (1987). Expository text structure: Teaching and learning strategies. *Reading Teacher, 40*(9), 838-847.

Ryder, R. J., & Graves, M. F. (1998). *Reading and learning in content areas (2nd ed.)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall Inc.

Tierney, R. J., Readence, J. E., & Dishner, E. K. (1990). *Reading strategies and practices: A compendium (3rd ed.)*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Williamson, R. A. (1996). InSight - strategies for questioning. *Journal of the Texas State Reading Association, 3*(1), 35-38.

Dr. Mary E. Howe may be reached at Mississippi State University in Mississippi State, MS.

Dr. Rich Radcliffe and Dr. Bonnie Higginson may be contacted at Murray State University in Murray, KY.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Reading Professor
1999, 22, (1) 54-77

TEACHING READING IN INNER-CITY SCHOOLS: EXPLORING THE CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED BY EXPERIENCED TEACHERS

Carol Leroy and Mary Cronin

The discussion below is based on a study intended to explore local teachers' perspectives on the challenges they face in teaching reading in inner-city schools and to use this exploration as a springboard for reflecting on ways to better prepare education students to teach in low-income urban settings. The first part of the discussion provides a background to the study, the second provides information about the methods used for collecting and interpreting the data, and the third presents the findings. In the last part, implications are discussed for our practices as professors of reading in pre-service teacher education.

Background To The Study

As with other social contexts where there are large numbers of children identified as "at-risk," inner-city schools serve a diverse range of children, many of whom have multiple and complex needs. These children are often living in poverty and can be experiencing a variety of risk factors that are known to adversely affect learning in the home and

community. These factors include living in substandard housing, being in poor health, having teenage parents or parents who themselves do not have formal education, experiencing dislocation, and living in homes and communities where there are a variety of social problems such as violence (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1995; Statistics Canada, 1996). According to research on children in working-class or poor communities, an additional challenge is when children differ from the mainstream by virtue of their culture or social class, there is potential for discontinuity, or even conflict, between the kinds of reading they learn at home and the kinds they are expected to learn at school. These discontinuities not only create confusion for the children, but can also contribute to identity and cultural conflicts that make it difficult for them to participate in school-based literacy (Au, 1998; Delpit, 1995; Heath, 1983; Ogbu, 1993). Hence, while issues of economic disadvantage are central ones in the provision of reading instruction for children in inner-city schools, additional sociocultural issues affecting their learning may also need to be taken into consideration in the classroom. Due to the complexity of these issues, developing sound teacher judgment for teaching reading in inner-city schools continues to be a challenge.

As teacher educators charged with the responsibility of preparing education students for the teaching of reading in diverse settings, of particular interest to us are the perspectives brought to bear by inner-city teachers on the challenges of

their work. Many studies have been carried out on teachers' beliefs about reading (e.g., DeFord, 1983) and there is a growing body of literature on teachers' beliefs about children in low-income communities (e.g., Swadener & Lubeck, 1995). However, relatively little is understood about how inner-city teachers' perceive and attempt to meet the challenges of teaching reading in their schools. The premise of the current study was that exploring these perspectives could inform our work with undergraduates in teacher education because it would help us see the challenges from the practitioners' point of view.

The research questions were as follows:

1. What challenges do the participating teachers identify as most important to their teaching of reading at the elementary level?
2. What methods and resources do the teachers say are most helpful to them in meeting these challenges?
3. What are the implications of these teachers' perspectives for improving the preparation of pre-service teachers for teaching reading in inner-city schools?

Methodology

The study was designed to investigate participants' points of view and the research questions were exploratory in nature. Therefore, we used qualitative methods for data collection and analysis with a small sample of participants (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, Cresswell, 1994). Four

teachers from different schools were selected for participation on the basis of having at least five years teaching experience in an inner-city elementary setting and on the basis of showing an active interest in sharing their views with us. In addition, because we wished to hear the voices of teachers who are not sufficiently represented in our academic milieu, another criterion was that the participants hold neither post-graduate degrees nor consulting or curriculum leadership positions in their school districts. The participating teachers' years of experience ranged from five to thirty years. They were currently teaching in grades one to three. All of them had additional experience teaching at other grade levels and in non inner-city settings.

We interviewed each of the teachers individually on three occasions, for approximately one hour at a time. The interviews took place in the teachers' classrooms outside of school hours. The questions were open-ended and semi-structured to allow for focus on the topic while maintaining flexibility to accommodate additional concerns raised by the participants (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). The questions included: What are the most important challenges you face in your teaching of reading? What strategies are you using to meet these challenges? What resources do you find most helpful in meeting these challenges? The interviews were fully transcribed and then reviewed for repeating patterns pertaining to each of the research questions. These patterns were coded to form preliminary categories for analysis. The final interpretation was based on connections we

identified within and between categories (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998).

Findings

Teachers' Beliefs About the Challenges

The teachers in this study felt that poor literacy experiences in inner-city homes create major challenges for their teaching of reading, and they often made reference to inadequate "involvement" by parents in their children's literacy. One teacher summarized the problem as being related to children's "lack of experience" with reading in the home, adding, "If you don't have experience, there's a barrier right there." Another teacher stated that many of her pupils arrive at school without having had the language development other children have had from "listening to stories from the time they were born." It was also suggested that parents often come to the school "and say they are worried" about their children's literacy, but that these parents do not understand the central role they need to play in their children's education. According to the teacher who made this suggestion, "Education is a twenty-four hour responsibility and it's not just the teacher's responsibility. If children don't learn that reading has to occur outside of school, they are not going to be successful."

The participants also suggested that managing children's behavior was a major challenge in their teaching of reading, citing examples of how children would "act out" by having "outbursts" and engaging in "aggression" and "verbal abuse" in the

classroom. In addition, the teachers generally felt that the children's attention spans were shorter than they should be. One of the participants specified, "I am not a pusher of Ritalin," but she added that some of the children in her class were on the drug, and that perhaps there were more children in her class who should be. In spite of this tacit reference to Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder as a cause of poor attention and behavioral difficulties, in large part the teachers felt such problems were related to social conditions in the home, which led to "excessive TV watching," "poor diet," and "lack of sleep."

Sometimes there was reference to deeper problems in homes where the children did not have a "stable, secure, existence." Referring to the high rate of transience in the community surrounding her school, one teacher reported that she had "twenty-eight students in my class and twenty-five of them came and went through the year." This teacher also reported that, for some of the children in her classroom, the school provided the only safe environment they had. She indicated that this was most evident in her classroom at times when the children knew they were going to be away from school:

> It seems to happen around certain times of the year. Sometimes we find it when the children are going to be going home for Christmas holidays, and it's almost like they're angry at you because you're gone. You are not going to be a part of their life, and they know that they are not going to have that steady thing. So,

they almost hate you at that time, and they act out. Yet, when they come back they can be really happy to be back and settle into a norm.

Teachers' Beliefs About Reading Instruction
Reading as a Social Process

The teachers in this study said it was a priority for them to get the children involved in reading, and all the activities they reported using to meet this goal were social in nature. Examples of these activities included: the whole class reading words that had been posted around the room, the teacher reading aloud to the children daily, choral reading of charts that contained poems or songs, and having the children read one-on-one with "reading buddies" from a higher grade. The teachers cited several benefits to having the children socially engaged in reading. First, they said the children are better able to focus their attention when reading together. Second, in their view, sharing the reading process allows everyone to be successful because, "The stronger ones will pull the weaker ones along." Third, reading together enables children to find pleasure in reading, which is something many of them do not experience at home or at school when reading alone. For example, when one participant spoke of reading to her students "little books" to start and then gradually introducing longer books, she talked about how the children became engaged in reading in a way they had not been before.

They have to sit and listen. They get really

enthusiastic about it. We talk about the story and try to illustrate it in our heads as to what would be happening. And they are really enthusiastic about it. But I think it is one of those things they have to be taught about it in school.

These teachers also mentioned the sharing of songs, poetry and oral stories as an important way to get the children involved in reading. One of them said, "We sing about our feelings, we sing about our friends, we sing about animals." Then she added that when the children were singing, they "opened up" and were subsequently able to talk about their experiences, and feelings. This teacher also noted that an important aspect of poetry and songs was the framework or pattern that allowed for rewriting of the text in accordance with various themes or topics familiar to the children. For example, she said that when she revised the words to songs such as "Twinkle Twinkle, Little Star," and "I'm a Little Teapot" to accommodate the children's experiences, they were able to quickly learn the new vocabulary because they were already familiar with both the experience and the structure of the songs. With respect to singing about experiences such as losing a tooth, she said, "They are so excited because they can relate to these things happening and they really enjoy them."

Phonics and Grammar

The teachers in this study gave many examples of activities they used to enhance children's learning of phonics and grammar for

their reading. One of them drew on Anna Ingham's *Blended Sight-Sound Method* (Ingham, 1978) to develop an activity that revolved around poems that were introduced weekly to the children. On Monday, the poem was introduced to the children and they discussed with the teacher "mostly about the structure of it, the lines, the rhyming words, how many sentences and that type of thing." Then, each child made his or her own copy of the poem and read it every day for the remainder of the week. In addition, the teacher used the same poem for daily whole-class instruction in a variety of word patterns and grammatical conventions: "homonyms, synonyms, contractions, vowels, and then the sentence structure because sometimes it's a statement, sometimes it's a question, and sometimes it's an exclamation." This teacher stated that the weekly poem was an ideal way to teach phonics and grammar because "it's simple" and "it's flexible." Most importantly, from her perspective, what made this a good activity was that all the children could learn to read the poems she gave them. This was evident in her emphatic statement, "I think it really helps the children who think they can't read. I prove they can."

Another teacher spoke of the importance of phonics and gave the following example of how she "integrated" phonics instruction by teaching the children to locate and classify words with particular patterns:

I have things we call "house clues" and we use them a lot. Little things in the shape of houses, and on the top it has "ow" and underneath it would be

"brown, town, frown" or something. And then "ir" and "girl [and] birthday" and so on. And we say those in rote . . . "ee" is actually the first one in "green," "seed," and those kinds of things. And they get to [the point] where they will find words [in their reading materials and in the classroom] they have never seen before.

When the teachers were asked how they knew the above activities were helpful for the children's reading, they repeatedly referred to the children's enthusiasm for the activities, to the children's perception that the activities were "fun," and to their observation that these activities enable the children to "feel good because right away they are able to read something." The quick pace of the preceding activities was also viewed as beneficial because it matched the children's short attention span. As one teacher put it, "You have to keep moving or you'll lose them."

Home-School Connections

Even though the participants stated that the preceding classroom activities enhanced their children's reading abilities, they did not think the classroom could provide all the reading practice the children needed. Because of this, they all reported using programs to encourage children to read at home. For example, one teacher said she provided the children with individualized "packs" of words to carry with them to read at home. Another teacher said she had her pupils write their own copies of poems they were learning to read at school, so they

could take them home and read them there. Finally, all the teachers said they implemented reading incentive programs, in which the children received tokens or little prizes in accordance with the amount of time or number of books they read outside of school hours.

One teacher questioned the implications of reading incentive programs, indicating that it is a method that can backfire on children whose parents remain uninvolved. She told us about a little boy who had come to her classroom crying because his mother would not read to him and so he could not win a prize. From her perspective, it seemed the boy felt left out of the program and perhaps stigmatized because of his parents' lack of involvement. However, the other teachers stated that incentive programs are helpful for many parents because they draw attention to the "simple things" they can do on a regular basis to help their children become readers. These teachers thought that it might be particularly important to have incentive programs for the sake of inner-city parents because the prizes provide an all-too-rare recognition of their contributions to their children's successes.

At the same time, the teachers' comments also indicated that such recognition might be as important for the teachers as for the parents. As one of them put it, a major influence on her selection of reading activities was not just that the children "always seem happy with it" but also that she "saw the support from home and received positive comments from parents." Thus, activities to support home-school connections in children's reading did

not just seem to be a means toward skill development. These activities seemed to enable teachers and parents to gain positive feedback from each other, to reinforce their shared efforts, and to feel like part of a team.

Resources

Curriculum Resources

All the teachers in this study said they used parts of commercially-published basal reading or language arts programs in their classrooms. The programs they mentioned were ones that have a student-centered emphasis and include children's literature in the student anthologies. The examples they gave were *Impressions*, *Journeys*, *Waves*, and the *Circle Program*, which is a reading program designed to link literacy with the sociocultural experiences of Aboriginal children (Leroy, 1992). However, none of the teachers reported using any of these programs in its entirety. Rather, they said the resources in the programs alone were not sufficient to meet the children's need, and they stated that it was a challenge for them to find enough additional appropriate reading materials for the children. One of the teachers said, "I think that's still a barrier. Finding things that are easy to read and yet have some quality to them." When asked what she meant by "quality," she specified "quality language" and then said she meant books that deal with what the children know in their "everyday life" and "that they can relate to." In contrast, the other participants

simply referred to the children's enjoyment of books and their ability to read them as their main criteria for book selection.

The teachers generally felt that curriculum and reading materials were in short supply in their schools. One teacher said that she had accumulated a large collection of children's reading materials over the twenty years of her teaching career, and she questioned how beginning teachers would be able to launch a sound reading program without a large personal collection of children's literature at their fingertips. The teachers also said that it was a challenge for them to locate sufficient resources for their own teaching ideas, and one of them said she always told education students to start collecting their own resources as soon as possible, "wherever you see something that is sort of at a primary level," including word games, teachers' guidebooks, and ideas for bulletin boards, which she said "can be a real learning tool." In a similar vein, another participant specified that in middle-income communities a teacher can rely on parents to locate and provide appropriate reading materials for their children, but she said this is not the case in inner-city schools:

> And it's fine in some schools, again in the more affluent areas where they have fundraising and they make twenty thousand dollars, where they can go out and buy a lot of things. But in schools where fund-raisers bring in less money, there is not that money to go out and get extras. It is always the same. The community schools or core schools are the

ones that need that. And of course we are the ones that have the least of it.

Human Resources

The teachers in this study emphasized the importance of human resources to support their work with the children, although there was variation among the teachers with respect to the nature of the human support they gave as examples. One of them spoke of the value of having a teacher librarian in the school to assist with the acquisition of resources and the development of thematic units. Another participant spoke about the need to have someone, like a community volunteer, in the school who could simply read to the children and to listen to them read in small groups. Learning assistance teachers were cited by a third teacher as being important for the provision of instruction because she felt that when children are in the large regular classroom all day, it is too easy for some of them to "get lost in the shuffle." Finally, one of the teachers stated that it was important to have in the classroom "a community person or an associate" who could work with the children "who have extreme outbursts." In addition, this teacher said it was important to have a principal who was supportive, particularly where children had to be referred to other professionals, such as a doctor or social worker. She emphasized that such referrals "take time" whereas the children need help "today, right now, and they need it often." What was really

necessary, in her opinion, was a "social worker or that kind of thing" full time in the school.

Implications For Teacher Education

As a qualitative study, this research was not designed to create generalizations about the beliefs held by inner-city teachers with respect to the teaching of reading. Instead, it provides a starting point for reflecting on ways in which our own practice as teacher educators may be improved. The following are some themes that have emerged from our reflections.

Family Literacy in the Inner-City

With uses of terms such as "inner-city," "core," or "at-risk" there is potential for stereotyping children, their families, and their communities (e.g., Delpit, 1995; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988; Heath, 1983; Swadener & Lubeck, 1995). However, research consistently shows that children in poverty often lag behind other children in their literacy development and that many of these children enter school without the literacy knowledge that other more affluent children have (Statistics Canada, 1996). As the teachers in this study pointed out, it may be unrealistic to expect teachers to provide these children with all the reading experiences they need in order to become successful. Because of this, today's teachers need to recognize the important role played by parents and

to learn ways of working with parents to support their children's literacy.

In order to better prepare our education students to work effectively with parents in inner-city communities, we suggest a three-pronged approach. First, the pre-service teachers should become familiar with the literature on the family literacy of children in poverty, particularly with respect to learning about the strengths researchers have found in families who, on the surface, might otherwise appear to have little to offer their children (e.g., Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines 1988). Second, it would be beneficial if the education students could visit and study local family literacy programs so that they can gain firsthand information about what they do. Finally, it is important for the education students to link this firsthand information of local programs with knowledge of basic principles that are known to make school-family partnerships in literacy effective (Thomas, 1998). Understanding these theory-practice links would enhance the flexibility with which they can implement family literacy initiatives in their future practice.

Children's Behavior and Reading Instruction

Another implication for teacher education in reading arises from the extent to which the teachers in this study reported that their instructional decisions were influenced by behavioral concerns, such as the children's inappropriate expressions of anger and their short attention spans. Unfortunately, many of these problems are often rooted in

experiences the children have had with violence, with dislocation from their homes, and with other social issues that can leave children experiencing deep-seated anger and insecurity (Leroy, 1996). As such, our education students need to recognize the reality that behavior problems cannot be solved simply through the imposition of authority over children in reading and writing lessons, nor can they be resolved through the allowance of an undue degree of freedom to children over the parameters of their learning. Rather, our education students need to become familiar with ways teachers can handle the difficult tension between their exertion of control and the provision of freedom to children in their classrooms. As Erickson (1996) points out, this tension permeates the fact of teaching, but it is particularly strong in the teaching of minority students who may have less reason than other children do to place a high degree of trust in the teacher.

In our opinion, viewing the video, *Teaching Reading Comprehension: Experience and Text* (Ahuna-Ka'ai'ai, 1991) provides an excellent context for education students to begin thinking about how such trust can be fostered in the teaching of reading. It depicts a Native Hawaiian teacher who is adept at negotiating with her students the discrepancy between the theme she wants them to construct from a story and the theme that emerges from the links they make between their experience and the text. This is a concrete example with which education students can begin considering what it means to be a teacher who maintains leadership in

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

reading instruction but at the same time responds with sensitivity and caring to children's experiences. As a follow-up, it would be helpful if the education students could carry out focused observations of teacher-student interactions in the classrooms of local exemplary teachers with these questions in mind: How do rules and routines in this classroom support positive behavior? What does the teacher do to help the children feel secure and respected? How are meanings negotiated? What are the potential points of tension or conflict in this classroom community? How are these resolved? And, most importantly: How are caring relationships fostered in and through various reading and writing activities in the classroom?

Phonics and Grammar

Another implication of the study concerns the multiple strategies that future teachers of reading will need to have at their disposal for teaching phonics and grammar. It seems that the teachers in this study would agree with the Whole Language tenet that much of children's learning in these areas occurs through informal participation in games, poetry and songs (Goodman, 1996). However, it seems they would also agree with Adams (1992) on the importance of explicit instruction for children in the structures of language, and with Delpit (1995) , who argues that to deny explicit language instruction to children in poverty is to deny them the cultural capital they need to be successful later in life. This finding points to the need for education

students to develop an in-depth understanding of the nature of written language, the complexity of sound-symbol relationships, and the variety of practices that support young children's abilities to approach language strategically.

Not surprisingly, when asked how they knew particular activities were successful, the teachers in this study cited evidence from their own observations of children rather than theory or research. For example, they said that the children enjoyed the activities, paid attention to them, and seemed to be extending their understanding of literacy through engaging in them. Extending their notion of child observation as the main way of judging the success of various instructional approaches, it becomes important for novice teachers to master an array of authentic assessments, such as portfolios and miscue analysis. Mastering these assessment practices will enable our prospective teachers to monitor children's learning and, in turn, their own teaching.

Human and Other Resources

In relation to the findings pertaining to the resources used by these teachers, it seems that human resources deserve greater emphasis in our teacher education programs. In order to prepare our education students to draw on human resources, we need to foster their collaboration with each other while they are in our program, and to link this collaboration more explicitly to the ways professionals can work across disciplines such as

Social Work, Psychology, and Teacher Librarianship. Furthermore, given the growth of volunteer and mentorship programs in schools, it will become increasingly important for our pre-service teachers to be prepared to work with the non-professionals who play a variety of roles in schools.

Finally, with respect to the difficulty our participants reported in locating appropriate curriculum resources, we think we may have been overestimating the extent to which such resources are at teachers' fingertips within inner-city schools. It may be unsatisfactory to simply provide education students with foundational knowledge of children's literature and its use in the classroom. Based on what the teachers reported, education students also need to learn practical strategies for locating materials locally, for adapting them for use in their classrooms, and for creating some of their own

Conclusion

Much has been written about ways we might better meet the challenges of providing better reading instruction for children in poverty. However, it has long been of concern to us that teachers' voices tend to be absent from discussions on this topic, particularly the voices of teachers who are not active in the academic milieu. Because of this concern, the current study was designed to explore the perspectives of practicing teachers who speak from their experiences in inner-city classrooms and whose points of views on practical

issues might help us pinpoint areas for improvement in our own practices as professors of reading. The practical challenges they identified were related to the needs to foster stronger support literacy in the homes of children in inner-city communities, to deal with behavioral problems that often reflect problems in the home and community, to provide explicit instruction in phonics and word analysis, to have resources available for reading instruction, and to provide stronger professional support systems to the children and teachers within the school. Preparing our current education students to meet these challenges will be a challenge in itself, but we found that listening to these teachers was extremely useful in identifying some directions we can take within our reading classes. Indeed, we will be pleased to encourage our students to use many of the strategies identified by these teachers as potentially helpful in their practice.

Like the teachers in this study, we do not believe that children learn to read simply by reading, but that they need guidance in focusing their attention, learning to identify themselves as readers, and constructing meaning from what they read. In this respect, even though the teachers in this study did not make reference to formal theories, it seems they have much in common with those of us who subscribe to the sociocultural theory that learning to read is a social process whose success rests on the strength of a collaborative community supporting children's learning (John-Steiner & Holbrook, 1999; Wells, 1999) Furthermore, we are much in accord with our participants' belief that

teaching reading in inner-city schools is not just a matter of implementing particular methods but engaging with children and with others to foster stronger communities for learning.

References

Adams, M. J. (1992). Word recognition and reading. In C. J. Gordon, G. D. Labercane, W. R. McEachern (Eds.) *Elementary reading process and practice.* (pp. 45-67). Needham Heights, MA: Ginn Press.

Ahuna-Ka'ai'ai, J. (1991). Teaching Reading Comprehension: Experience and Text (Video). (R.C. Anderson & K.H. Au, Directors). *Teaching Reading : Strategies from Successful Classrooms.* Urbana-Champaign, IL: Center for the Study of Reading.

Au, K. H. (1998). Social constructivism and the school literacy learning of students of diverse backgrounds. *Journal of Literacy Research. (30)* 2, 297-318.

Bogdan, R.C. & Biklen, S.K. (1998). *Qualitative research in education: An introduction to theory and methods.* (3rd ed.,). Needham Heights: MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Cresswell, J.W. (1994).*Research design: Quantitative and qualitative approaches.* London: Sage Publications.

Delpit, L. (1995). *Other people's children: cultural conflicts in the classroom. New York: New Press.*

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Deford, D. E. (1983). Validating the construct of theoretical orientation in reading. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 20, 351-367.

Erickson, F. (1996). Transformation and school success: The politics and culture of educational achievement. In Jacob, E. & Jordan, C. (Eds), *Minority education: Anthropologic perspectives.* (pp. 27-51) Norwook, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corporation.

Heath, S.B. (1983). *Ways with words: Language, life, and work in communities and classrooms.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Goodman, K. (1996*). On reading.* Richmond Hill, ON: Scholastic Canada.

Ingham, A. G. (1978*). The blended sight-sound method of learning.* (No publisher).

John-Steiner, V., & Holbrook, M. (1999). Sociocultural approaches to learning and development: A Vygotskian framework. Retrieved September 30, 1999 from the World Wide Web: http://www.geocities.com/~nschmolze/johnsteiner.html.

Leroy, C. (1992). Review of the Circle Program. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 19*(1), 119-122.

Leroy, C. (1996). Disclosure and resistance: Girls' silence in an inner-city classroom. In J.R. Epp and A.M. Watkinson. *Systemic violence: How schools hurt children.* London: The Falmer Press

Ogbu, J. (1993). Frameworks: Variability in school performance: A problem in search of an explanation. In E. Jacob and C. Jordan (Eds.) *Minority education: Anthropological approaches* (pp. 83-109). Norwood: Ablex Publishing Corp.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (1995). *Our children at risk.* Paris: Author.

Statistics Canada. (1996). *Growing up in Canada: National longitudinal survey of children and youth.* Ottawa, ON: Minister of Industry

Swadener, B.B. & Lubeck, S. (1995). *Children and families "at promise": Deconstructing the discourse of risk.* Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York.

Taylor, D. & Dorsey-Gaines, C. (1988). *Growing up literate: Learning from inner-city families.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Thomas, A. (1998). *Family literacy in Canada: Profiles of effective practices.* Welland, ON: Editions Soleil

Wells, G. (1999). *Dialogical inquiry in education: Building on the legacy of Vygotsky.* Retrieved October, 1999 from the World Wide Web http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/~gwells/NCYE.html

Dr. Leroy may be reached at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada.
Dr. Cronin may be reached at the University of Regina, Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada.

The Reading Professor
1999, 22, (1) 78-98

PHOTO STORY WRITING: INTEGRATING ALL LANGUAGE MODES IN TEACHING LITERACY TO ELEMENTARY ESL STUDENTS

Ping Liu and Richard Parker

For English as Second Language (ESL) students, English proficiency is a fundamental skill that must be acquired in order to communicate and achieve academic success in public schools. ESL students should not only become competent in using the language as a means for daily interaction, but should also be adequately prepared to accomplish academic tasks in their non-native language. Due to the home language environment, some ESL students may not have fully developed communicative skills and may find it challenging to learn to read and write. Thus, instruction involving all aspects of English must be provided in order for them to become proficient in the language.

Therefore, in an ESL classroom, all language mode – listening, speaking, reading, and writing – should be integrated, because all the processes interact with each other and all expressions of language support the growth of literacy (Brown & Cambourne, 1987; Freeman & Freeman, 1992; Gee, 1996; Harste, Woodward, & Burke, 1984). ESL students should be better

prepared to complete reading and writing tasks, and thereby be given the opportunity to construct and negotiate meaning through oral language. In order to practice all language modes, students must communicate with peers and with those who can facilitate their learning. This interaction then becomes both a communicative and learning process.

Literacy scaffolds or language scaffolding (Boyle & Peregoy, 1990; Bruner, 1978; Meyer, 1993; Richgels & Wold, 1998) constructed between teachers/parents and children has been indicated as a crucial factor that influences both L1 and L2 children's literacy development. These are special ways in which teachers and parents may elaborate and expand upon children's early attempts to use language and develop literacy. These strategies facilitate effective communication at a level slightly above children's actual language competence. For ESL students, both linguistic and extra-linguistic cues, such as gestures, pictures, and familiar contexts should be supplied to enhance language learning (Freeman & Freeman, 1992; Gee, 1996).

Studies (Calkins, 1994; Gee, 1996) also indicate that students are motivated to write when writing assignments are personal and interpersonal. At the initial stage of language development, ESL students may find it especially helpful to improve their language learning by talking and writing about who and what they know. Discussing cognitive learning, Marzano (1992) hypothesized that "linking our prior knowledge to what we are about to learn is always the first type of thinking we use

when acquiring new knowledge" (p. 7). For ESL students, familiar topics may support students' efforts in making a connection with language symbols while avoiding the frustration that can arise from dealing with both content and language simultaneously. Moreover, a writing activity should be authentic so that those students can use the language naturally to fulfill real purposes in meaningful contexts (Edelsky, 1989; Hudelson, 1989).

Besides the classroom, home is another important place in which learning should occur. In the past decade, increased attention has been given to family literacy and the advantages of family literacy programs have been reported (Auerbach, 1995, Benjamin & Lord, 1996; Liu, 1996; Neuman, Caperelli & Kee, 1998). Children's literacy development has been recognized as a family issue and it is suggested that literacy learning is a social practice that should be enjoyed and shared with family and friends (Neuman, Caperelli & Kee, 1998). Nevertheless, ESL parents have not been effectively involved in their children's education for various reasons, most noticeably language barriers and unfamiliarity with the school systems (Scarcella, 1990). Educators should make a concentrated effort to communicate with the parents about their children's learning in school so that sufficient home support can be procured. Photo story writing, the activity presented in this article, is a strategy that may facilitate ESL students' literacy development by incorporating various factors. These factors include integrating all language

modes, providing a meaningful context, referring to topics familiar to students, and encouraging parental involvement.

Implementation of Photo Story Writing in a Family Literacy Program

Photo story writing was carried out among a group of ESL students and parents participating in a family literacy program conducted in the Alternative Learning Center of a school district. This program was a collaborative effort involving the school district and a nearby university. The goal of the program was to help both language minority parents and their elementary school children attain a higher level of literacy. Participants attended two evening sessions (6:00 - 9:00 P.M.) on Tuesday and Thursday weekly during a ten-week period of a fall semester. The following is a schedule for each evening session:

6:00-6:30 – Reading and Writing Assessments
6:30-7:30 – Homework and Reading Activities
7:30-8:00 – Snack Time and Interaction among Parents, Children, and Tutors
8:00-9:00 – Group Activities and Lesson Plans

Before the parents began their General Educational Development (GED) classes, which were instructed by the staff at the Center of Alternative Programs, they dropped their children off at the children's center. These children received support in completing their homework and improving literacy from volunteer tutors who were juniors and seniors in a Teacher Education Program

at the same university. All of these undergraduates were Caucasian and from middle class backgrounds and had had limited experience in culturally diverse environments. Several of the tutors had learned Spanish as a foreign language, while the others were monolingual.

The tutors attended two 2-hour training sessions before they started to work with the children. The first session was focused on how to use assessment means to measure children's reading and writing development. The reading assessment was based on reading comprehension passages (by grade levels). The tutors learned to record children's reading rate (words per minute) and performance in answering comprehension questions. In writing assessment, the tutors were introduced to a rubric to evaluate children's writing samples. This rubric included the following components: verbally creating story or description, organizing the story, composing the story, editing the first draft, finalizing written product, and involving in the total process. The second training session, on the other hand, was mainly a discussion of how to better communicate and work effectively with culturally diverse children and parents. The tutors learned about different second language learning programs, theories, approaches, and models; they also explored how to better understand cultural/language differences and reduce bias/prejudices to enhance children's learning. In the program, each tutor was assigned to work with two children simultaneously, with the group meeting as a whole for

approximately 20 minutes during each session for shared reading and writing activities.

Approximately fifteen children participated in this program. These children, ranging from second to fifth grades, were between the ages of 7 and 11. All of them attended elementary schools in the same local school district and most were enrolled in a bilingual or ESL program. Others had already been mainstreamed, though they still required support in English development. The ethnic backgrounds of these children were Hispanic, Hispanic American, and African, and their native languages included Spanish and Ethiopian. Most of the children were from low socioeconomic-status families and were qualified for a free or reduced lunch program. The parents were allowed to bring all school-aged children to the program. The number of children from each family ranged from one to three.

Both children's and adults' sites were located in the same building. During every session, there was a thirty-minute interaction activity (7:30 - 8:00 p.m.) among parents, children, and tutors to study together or to discuss issues regarding the children's learning. Photo story writing was one of the topics addressed during the interaction. At the beginning of the program, at least one child and a parent from each family were loaned a Polaroid camera with a 10-pack of instant film. They were required to take informal pictures that featured family members, friends, and pets engaged in typical activities. Photos were also to include familiar tools, toys, cooking utensils, and furniture.

The pictures could be of indoor or outdoor activities, such as washing the car, playing soccer, and skating on the sidewalk. In other words, students had the freedom to choose whatever situation they were familiar with and would like to include in their photos.

Of the ten pictures, six were selected by the students, parents, and tutors in the program as the subjects of stories that were to be written by the students. A discussion of each photo was held between the students and the tutors before the students began to write. The tutor would ask a child: "What would you like to say about this picture?" or "What is going on here?" or "Can you tell me something interesting about this?" From the conversation, the students were expected to generate ideas regarding the organization of their writing. Rather than merely labeling objects or people in the photograph, a writing focus based on and beyond the photo was established. Students' personal feelings and reflection on the photos were often discussed in pre-writing exercises. The students then received support in language arts and writing skills by revising the stories under the tutors' guidance. With the writing products completed, the children were required to read their composed stories to their parents and siblings at home and to other children and tutors in the program. The manner in which the students were engaged in this activity is illustrated by the following example.

Sally, a fifth grade student, chose to write about a picture taken on the school playground in

which her teacher and a group of students played ball together. After discussing with her parents and tutor why she wanted to write about this picture, Sally wrote a paragraph focusing on her teacher and titled her story "Mrs. B." Her story (See sample 1) reads:

"Mrs. B is my teacher she is very nice to me. One day, we was all playing a game and the ball was coming to her so she had to drunck down on the ground it was a lot of fun to ball it we was so happy because we were going to have a party in are class room it was a fun day for use we was the best class in are shoole."

In this story, Sally focused on her teacher and the activities in which they were participating that day. She also expressed her feelings towards her teacher and her pride in being a part of a "best-ranked" class at her school. However, run-on sentences and insufficient support of main ideas were major weaknesses, in addition to other mechanical errors in spelling and grammar.

After an informal assessment of the writing product by the tutor, the writer witnessed and recorded (audio) the conversation between the tutor (T) and Sally (S).

T: I enjoyed reading your story. It seems to me that you really like your school and your teacher. The first sentence says that your teacher is nice. Could you tell me why you think she is nice?

S: She helps me with my work. She never yell at me. We do a lot of fun stuff in class. Oh, she also take us to field trips. Last week, we went to a donut shop. It was fun.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

T: I am glad you enjoyed the trip. If you add what you just said to the story, your story would be much clearer because you explain why your teacher is nice. When you make a comment and have a main idea, you need to support it with details. By the way, did you realize you paused after you finished speaking a sentence? I wonder how we can show a pause in writing.

S: (Hesitantly) You put a period there.

T: Good job! Oh, there is a period right here in your story (pointing at the first period in the writing sample). Now I want you to repeat and write down what you just said about your teacher and put a period down when you pause. (The student did as suggested). Wow, look at how long your story is now! Your parents would be so proud of you if you show and read it to them. It seems the last sentence in your story is too long. Would you like to read it out loud to yourself and see if more periods are needed?

(During oral reading and marking periods, Sally also changed "we was" to "we were")

T: Do you want to add anything to the end of your story?

S: (Looking down at the story and then up at the tutor, she was unable to respond to the question)

T: Why do you think your class is the best? (Pointing at the title of the story) Does it have anything to do with Mrs. B.?

S: Oh, yeah. She is the best.

After the revision was completed, Sally, under the supervision of her tutor, sat down at a computer and input the story as follows:

"Mrs. B is my teacher she is very nice to me. She helps me with my work. She doesn't yell at me. We do a lot of fun staff at shoole. She also take us to field trips. One day, we were all playing a game and the ball was coming to her. So she had to drunck down on the ground. It was a lot of fun to play ball. We were so happy because we were going to have a party in are class room. It was a fun day for use. We are the best class in are shoole because Mrs. B is the best teacher".

That evening when all children gathered to share (read) their photo stories, Sally read her story to the group. At the tutor's request, she also reported to the group how she used oral reading to add periods in the story and how she provided more information to support the first sentence and ending in her story.

Back at the tutoring session, the tutor helped Sally make a checklist for her future writing: a) read orally to mark sentences with a period, b) use details to support a main idea. The tutor provided several examples (her father, a cat, and her best friend) to help Sally understand the second criterion. The checklist was placed in Sally's folder for reference. The tutor then wrote down two pairs of words, "us vs. use" and "are vs. our," for the student to identify and differentiate. The student was able to choose the right word to correct the errors in her writing. After editing, the final product of the photo and Sally's story was then printed.

Obviously, the development of literacy is a long process that entails constant guidance and repeated reinforcement. When Sally wrote her next

photo story about her class, she again forgot to use periods. Subsequently, the first question the tutor asked Sally was whether she had referred to her checklist before or after she wrote the story. During the parent/child interaction break, the tutor talked to Sally's mother about the checklist and asked her to remind Sally to use it when she wrote. In so doing, the parent was informed specifically of her responsibilities and learned how to provide home support.

For parents like Sally's mother, the benefits they received by participating in the family literacy program can be summarized in the following two aspects. First, the parents learned how to become an active part of their children's education. They felt encouraged that teachers (tutors in this program) valued their contributions and honored their roles as co-educators. More importantly, they learned specific ways to provide home assistance within their power. Secondly, the parents themselves advanced literacy skills, became better readers and writers, and set up good examples for the next generation. The most convincing evidence of the parents' literacy advancement is that more than 80% of them passed the GED tests.

Classroom Application

In traditional school settings, cameras are usually unavailable for students to borrow to take pictures. Nevertheless, cameras are so common these days that even economically disadvantaged families can afford one or more cameras. When

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

asked to check out a Polaroid camera to help their children take photos, some of the parents in the Family Literacy Program said that they already had such cameras at home. Therefore, photo story writing should be a feasible and affordable method for improving students' writing ability in classroom applications.

Since photo story writing was implemented in an atypical classroom setting, the following suggestions are proposed to classroom teachers to make the activity a success in their instruction. These suggestions include modeling the writing procedures, providing guidelines for selecting or shooting pictures, allowing students to report family involvement, and sharing and commenting on photo stories in a group or class.

1. Modeling the procedures.

A teacher should instruct students how to make use of a picture to generate topic ideas. The teacher may bring a personal picture to the classroom to teach the lesson. First, discuss the background of the picture and encourage students to ask questions. The teacher may then demonstrate how to "brainstorm" by thinking out loud and how to make a list of the points discussed. It may be necessary to ask students to refer to the list and dictate what to write about the story. Meanwhile, the teacher records the spoken information on the blackboard or on an overhead projector. During the recording, the teacher may stop when necessary and introduce students to writing skills and strategies based on their responses and the lesson objective(s).

2. Providing guidelines for selecting or shooting pictures.

Instead of limiting photos to the products of a Polaroid camera, a classroom teacher may allow students to choose pictures from their family albums. At the initial stage of the activity, students may be encouraged to choose pictures that fall into categories such as people, special occasions, and trips.

Pictures should not be limited to students' home surroundings. When students are competent in writing about familiar home settings and are at an advanced grade with improved literacy skills, they should be encouraged to write about pictures of other settings, such as a science museum, a resort, or a space center that they have visited. In implementing this activity, the teacher should ensure, with more directed instruction, that students gradually learn the expected writing skills, as required in the given curriculum, by integrating free writing about their personal experiences.

3. Allowing students to report family involvement.

An effort must be made to invite family involvement. Ask students to discuss in class how their families help them and what suggestions they obtain from their family members in photo selection and writing preparation. If time for oral sharing is limited, journal writing can serve as a good medium for a teacher to check all students' informal writing and their family's participation in the activity. Based on journal entries, a teacher may identify

what should be addressed in reaching some students' families. In addition, the teacher may communicate with some parents through responses to the students' journals, letting parents know how their involvement supports the children's learning. Moreover, an evaluative checklist constructed between the teacher and a student may play an important part in eliciting parents' participation. This communication may gradually lead to the establishment of a bond between school and home.

4. Sharing and commenting on photo stories in a group or class.

After students finish writing their stories, they may volunteer to introduce their photos and then read their stories to the class. This often presents a good opportunity for teachers to model peer evaluation and assess anticipated learning outcomes. A list of criteria related to instructional goals may be supplied for the students to focus on in their critiques. At the initial stage, a short list (the use of adjectives, details and examples to support main ideas, titling a story, and the clarity of a story) can be displayed on the blackboard or a poster for references throughout the activity. The teacher may direct the students' attention to a specific criterion based on a particular story shared. For instance, the teacher may ask, "What's the main idea in John's story?" and "How did John support the main idea(s) in his story?" to elicit students' response if no comment has been made regarding this aspect of the writing process. As a result, peer evaluations may also serve the purposes of re-clarifying the teaching

objectives and reinforcing anticipated learning outcomes.

Photo story writing may not only address students' communicative abilities and writing needs, but can also be extended to the development of reading skills. With teachers' and parents' assistance, students edit their products and publish their photo stories as an enrichment of the classroom library. Photos are more vivid and true to life than drawings and can be pasted within the text as illustrations. Students can read each other's photo stories and then discuss any issues related to the story with the authors so that everyone has something to share with the rest of the class. More literacy activities can be generated from students' photo story reading. Reflective journal entries may be exchanged between the students who have commented on their peers' writing samples.

Discussion

In photo story writing, ESL students learn English by describing pictured scenes, both orally and in writing, with which they are familiar in their lives. A meaningful context in which to use language for a real purpose is therefore provided. Due to the familiarity of the topics, the students' main focus in accomplishing a language task is placed on identifying and using appropriate language symbols to express ideas in both oral and written forms. This writing task is an ongoing and cross-language mode process in which the learners experience connection between different language

aspects to enhance their understanding and usage of English. Photo story writing activities obviously support the studies (Brown & Cambourne, 1987; Freeman & Freeman, 1992; Gee, 1996; Harste, Woodward, & Burke, 1984) that emphasize the importance of language integration in English acquisition.

However, photo story writing entails much more than integration of language modes. The support that ESL students receive during social interaction to improve their learning is another prominent feature. A teacher plays the role of a guide, a consultant, and a facilitator in eliciting students' responses around the situation in the picture and asking questions that may help students generate ideas in writing. The conversation between Sally and her tutor was a good example of how language scaffolding (Boyle & Peregoy, 1990; Bruner, 1978; Meyer, 1993; Richgels & Wold, 1998) was provided for the former to pick up writing skills at a level slightly above her independent capacity. From the conversation, a checklist emerged to nurture Sally's independence, and her parents were also invited as "home monitors" in this collective effort. By asking Sally to share what she wrote with other students, she had the opportunity to confirm her understanding and her learning of English was therefore reinforced. Throughout the process, Sally received support and guidance to acquire new knowledge that would fit into her current cognitive schema.

Participation in their children's learning has never been an easy task for language minority

parents. This is due mostly to limited educational experience, language barriers, and unfamiliarity with the education system. Not surprisingly, it is quite common that "many minority parents feel that they have been excluded from participating in our schools" (Scarcella, 1990, p. 161). Parents may feel intimidated and inadequate if a teacher asks them to help their children with *diphthongs* and *digraphs*, because they have yet to figure out these terms. Therefore, it is essential that a teacher approach parents at a level on which they are capable of participating. In photo story writing, when the parents were asked to assist their children in taking pictures and discussing them, they provided home support for their children's learning within their capacity. Although they were not ready to correct their children's writing, the parents helped their children become prepared for academic learning by discussing the writing topics with them. Meanwhile, this experience created an excellent opportunity for the parents to be informed of their children's school learning and to communicate with the teachers. For some parents, photo story writing, and going through the writing process with their children could even be a literacy learning event for the family. When a child shared a story with the family, language learning became a social practice that could be enjoyed by the whole family. Ultimately, sharing and discussion may potentially lead to the establishment of a good home literacy environment that is so crucial to a child's school success.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Conclusion

Photo story writing does not only create active peer and student/teacher interaction in the classroom, but it also involves students' families. The social interaction ESL students experience in creating their own stories and family involvement are probably the most distinctive features of this activity. By communicating with the teacher, peers, and others, ESL students are prepared to accomplish the writing task. The teacher, as a key figure in organizing the activity, must provide timely guidance and coordination in facilitating the students' acquisition of new knowledge. The learning outcome is reinforced during a variety of interactions that involve all language modes.

In addition, with the help of their families, students have the freedom with photo story writing exercises to select topics about which they wish to write. The parent/child interaction throughout the entire process allows parents to become aware of their children's academic progress and achievement in a consistent manner. For ESL parents, the activity may turn out to be a beneficial event for the whole family. Parents can enhance their level of literacy together with their children through discussing, describing, and finally reading these picture stories. Therefore, photo writing can be applied as a means of encouraging family literacy acquisition.

Lastly, photo story writing may provide ESL students with an opportunity to demonstrate their academic strengths. By talking with other students about their own stories, they may engage in

conversations at an appropriate level. The success in dealing with the assignment may gradually help them establish self-confidence during the process. The potential self-confidence could become a source of motivation for ESL children to face new academic challenges in handling various school tasks.

References

Auerbach, E. (1995). Critical issues: Deconstructing the discourse of strengths in family literacy. *JRB: A Journal of Literacy, 27*: 643-661.

Benjamin, L. A., & Lord, J. (1996). *Family literacy*. Washington, DC: Office of Educational Research and Improvement.

Boyle, O., & Peregoy, S. (1990). Literacy scaffolds: Strategies for first- and second-language readers and writers. *The Reading Teacher, 44*: 194-200.

Brown, H., & Cambourne, B. (1987). *Read and retell*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Bruner, J. (1978). The role of dialogue in language acquisition. In A. Sinclair, R. J. Jarvella, & W. Levelt (Eds.), *The child's conception of language* (pp. 44-62). New York: Springer-Verlag.

Calkins, L. M. (1994). *The art of teaching writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Edelsky, C. (1989). Bilingual children's writing: Fact and fiction. In D. Johnson & D. Roen (Eds.), *Richness in writing empowering ESL students*. New York: Longman.

Freeman, Y., & Freeman, D. (1992). *Whole language for second language learners*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Gee, R. W. (1996). Reading/Writing Workshops for the ESL Classroom. *TESOL Journal, 5* : 4-7.

Harste, J., Woodward, V., & Burke, C. (1984). *Language Stories and Literacy Lessons*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Hudelson, S. (1989). *Write on: Children writing in ESL*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Liu, P. (1996). Limited English Proficient children's literacy acquisition and parental involvement: A tutoring/family literacy model. *Reading Horizons, 37* 60-74.

Marzano, R. (1992). *A different kind of classroom: Teaching with dimensions of learning*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Meyer, D.K. (1993). What is scaffolded instruction? Definitions, distinguishing features, and misnomers. In D.J. Leu & C.K. Kinzer (Eds.), *Examining central issues in literacy research, theory, and practice* (pp. 41-53). Chicago: National Reading Conference.

100

Neuman, S.B., Caperelli, B.J., & Kee, C. (1998). Literacy learning: A family matter. *The Reading Teacher, 52*: 244-252.

Richgels, D.J. & Wold, L.S. (1998). Literacy on the road: Backpacking partnerships between school and home. *The Reading Teacher, 52*: 18-29.

Scarcella, R. (1990). *Teaching language minority students in the multicultural classroom*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Dr. Ping Liu may be reached at the Teacher Education Department at California State University, Long Beach.

Richard Parker may be reached at the Department of Educational Psychology, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX.

The Reading Professor
1999, 22, (1) 99-123

INTERPRETIVE COMPREHENSION: WHAT THE NAEP RESULTS MEAN FOR TEACHERS

Dale D. Johnson and Bonnie von Hoff Johnson

> We each bring to our reading the images, sensations, emotions, and experiences that constitute us as individuals; we populate the world of the book with our unique selves. No matter how carefully the writer might describe a place or a character, we each envision a different place and see a different character. (Furman & Standard, 1997, p. 86).
>
> Reading has a history. It was not always and everywhere the same. We may think of it as a straightforward process of lifting information from a page; but if we considered it further, we would agree that information must be sifted, sorted, and interpreted. (Darnton, 1990, cited in Birkerts, 1994, p. 70).

This article is concerned with interpretive comprehension--inferential, referential, and critical comprehension that, according to the recent NAEP reading report card (1999), eludes the majority of American youth. We first examine the NAEP reading assessment and its results. Then we

describe and exemplify the inferential, referential, and critical comprehension tasks with which so many students do so poorly. Finally, we recommend a generic teaching strategy to be used with these three types of reading comprehension.

More than 25 years ago Congress mandated that the U. S. Office of Education conduct an ongoing, comparable, representative assessment of the achievement of American students. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is the project that has conducted these assessments in reading, writing, mathematics, science, and other subjects. Assessments are conducted with scientifically selected samples of youths attending both public and private schools and enrolled in grades four, eight, and twelve. The NAEP instrument is our only ongoing survey of student achievement.

The most recent NAEP reading assessment is reported in a government publication, *NAEP 1998 Reading Report Card for the Nation and States* (1999). The report is based on assessments of national samples of fourth-, eighth-, and twelfth-grade students attending public and nonpublic schools in 40 states. Nearly 500,000 students were tested. The 285-page report contains an abundance of information about the status of reading in the United States.

NAEP Instrument

In American education there often has been a tendency to "kill the messenger" when we don't like the message. Standardized tests have been

convenient targets in the past 20 years. Tests are blamed for not testing properly or for testing the wrong things. NAEP sought to avoid such criticisms in its 1992, 1994, and 1998 reading assessments. The report states:

> The NAEP reading assessment reflects current research and perspectives on reading comprehension and its measurement. The development process for the assessment instruments involved a series of reviews by measurement experts, state officials, teachers, and reading researchers. All components of the assessment were evaluated for curricular relevance, developmental appropriateness, fairness concerns, and adherence to the framework and test specifications.
>
> Reading passages in the NAEP assessment instruments are drawn from a variety of sources largely available to students in and out of school. These reading materials are considered representative of real-life reading experiences in that they are unabridged stories, articles, and documents. Although presented to students in test booklets, all reading materials are reproduced to replicate as closely as possible their original format and presentation.
>
> Reading materials in the NAEP assessment instrument comprise either one 50-minute set or two 25-minute sets of passages and questions. The assessment includes both multiple-choice and constructed response

> questions. In contrast to multiple-choice questions, constructed response questions require students to write their own answer, and allow students to express and support their ideas in response to the text. By doing so, students demonstrate a range of abilities: describing interpretations, explaining personal reactions, generating conclusions, or supporting critical evaluations. (pp. 5-6)

In earlier reading assessments, NAEP had been criticized for using multiple-choice formats exclusively and for using only short chunks of excerpted or specially written text. Appendix C of the report (pp. 235-255) includes sample texts, questions, and responses from the 1998 assessment. In our opinion, the 1998 NAEP assessment instruments are as good as can be found in any standardized measure whose purpose is to report results that allow for group comparisons, not individual diagnosis.

NAEP Results

Overall, the assessment results reveal serious inadequacies in the reading achievement of American students at all three grade levels assessed. The NAEP report presents the percentages of students who successfully scored at or above each of three achievement levels: Basic, Proficient, and Advanced. The definitions of these levels for Grade 4 given in the NAEP report are:

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Basic Fourth-grade students performing at the Basic level should demonstrate an understanding of the overall meaning of what they read. When reading text appropriate for fourth graders, they should be able to make relatively obvious connections between the text and their own experiences and extend the ideas in the text by making simple inferences.

Proficient Fourth-grade students performing at the Proficient level should be able to demonstrate an overall understanding of the text, providing inferential as well as literal information. When reading text appropriate to fourth grade, they should be able to extend the ideas in the text by making inferences, drawing conclusions, and making connections to their own experiences. The connection between the text and what the student infers should be clear.

Advanced Fourth-grade students performing at the Advanced level should be able to generalize about topics in the reading selection and demonstrate an awareness of how authors compose and use literary devices. When reading text appropriate to fourth grade, they should be able to judge the text critically and, in general, give thorough answers that

indicate careful thought (p. 19).

At the risk of oversimplifying, Basic equates to literal comprehension, Proficient to inferential comprehension, and Advanced to critical comprehension.

Table 1 shows the percentage of students at or above the reading achievement levels by grade for 1998, 1994, and 1992. The Table needs some explanations because the percentages at or above a level subsume the percentages above them. The Table shows us that in 1998, 38 percent of fourth graders did not achieve the Basic level (understanding of the overall level). Of the remaining 62 percent who scored at or above the Basic level, 31 percent were at or above Proficient level (inferential comprehension) and 7 percent were at the Advanced level (critical comprehension).

The data in the Table are disturbing at all three grade levels and in all three assessments; however, we will focus on the fourth-grade results in 1998. At the fourth-grade level, only 62 percent of the students demonstrated that they could satisfactorily read at the Basic level or better, 31 percent could be identified as Proficient readers or better, and 7 percent could be considered Advanced readers. Stated more gloomily, about 38 percent of fourth graders could not read at the Basic level, 62 percent were not Proficient readers, and 93 percent were not

Table 1
Percentage of Students at or above the Reading Achievement Levels for the Nation

	Below Basic	At or above Basic	At or above Proficient	Advanced
		Nation		
		Grade 4		
1998	38	62	31	7
1994	40	60	30	7
1992	38	62	29	6
		Grade 8		
1998	26*+	74*+	33*+	3
1994	30	70	30	3
1992	31	69	29	3
		Grade 12		
1998	23*+	77*+	40+	6*+
1994	25	75	36	4
1992	20	80	40	4

* Indicates that the 1998 percentage is significantly different from the 1992 percentag

+ Indicates that the 1998 percentage is significantly different from the 1994 percentage.

NAEP, 1999, p. 20)

reading at an Advanced level.

We are concerned that as many as 62 percent of our fourth-graders cannot satisfactorily make inferences, draw conclusions, or make connections to their own experiences. We also are concerned that 93 percent cannot demonstrate an understanding of authors' use of literary devices and are unable to judge texts critically. American teachers, nevertheless, can take pride in the fact that scores were slightly better in 1998 than 1994 and 1992 at Grade Four. A further source of pride is that the NAEP achievement scores have not shown a decline since the first reading assessment was undertaken in 1971. American society and schools have undergone tremendous demographic and social change since then. In 1971, crack and crank were unheard of, many fewer students attended crumbling and dangerous schools, and there were far fewer "babies having babies" than today. Our teachers clearly are holding the line against ever-more-difficult teaching circumstances. Nonetheless, as we enter the new millennium, American elementary students must be able to handle interpretive reading tasks, what NAEP calls the Proficient and Advanced levels. Reading at or below the Basic level will be increasingly insufficient to cope with future demands.

Interpretive Comprehension

We contrast interpretive comprehension with literal comprehension by using the metaphor commonly attributed to William S. Gray. We think

of literal comprehension as "reading the lines" and interpretive comprehension as "reading between the lines." In our definition of interpretive comprehension we include three components: inferential comprehension, referential comprehension, and critical comprehension. These three categories of interpretive comprehension and their components are listed below. Definitions and examples follow each element.

The Elements of Interpretive Comprehension

Inferential Comprehension (reading between the lines)

Characterization	What is the character like? Who is being described here?
Feelings	What feelings or attitudes are being displayed?
Figurative Language	What is the intended meaning of the figurative expression?
Cause/Effect	What caused this? What will be its effect?
Action	What is happening?
Location	Where is this occurring?
Time	When does this take place?
Object	What is this thing?
Problem/Solution	What should be done about this?
Category	To what group do these belong?

Referential Comprehension (reading between the lines)

Exophora	words referring to concepts

t	outside the text
Endophora	words referring to words inside the text
Anaphora	words referring to words that came earlier
Cataphora	words referring to words that come later

Critical Comprehension (reading beyond the lines)
Distinguishing reality from fantasy
Determining facts and opinions
Detecting and evaluating bias
Analyzing propaganda
Detecting fallacies of reasoning
Assessing source credibility

Our readers are asked to compare the elements of interpretive comprehension presented above with the NAEP descriptions of Proficient and Advanced reading achievement. The two are closely matched and represent the aspects of comprehension with which American fourth-graders--and no doubt children in the other elementary grades--need help.

Students who often read become ever more skillful readers, so we urge teachers to allow them ample time for free reading. For most children, reading is not learned naturally, they must be taught and directed by a caring and knowledgeable teacher. We are unabashed supporters of using direct instruction when such instruction is required. The NAEP results reported earlier provide compelling evidence that many students have not acquired reading proficiency. Further evidence is provided in *What Works* (U. S. Department of Education, 1987), *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young*

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Children (Snow, Burns, & Griffin,1998), and *Teaching Reading Is Rocket Science (American* Federation of Teachers, 1999), all of which document the importance of direct instruction of comprehension processes.

The remainder of this article pertains to teaching children interpretive comprehension strategies. The three categories of interpretive comprehension are described and their components are exemplified next. Then we present a generic four-step teaching procedure that can be used with all three categories.

Inferential Comprehension

To make an inference means to derive an understanding of information not explicitly stated and to do this through reasoning based on available evidence. We make inferences about real world events (e.g., the sound of a siren late at night), pictures (e.g., faces of tornado survivors in Texas), illustrations and cartoons (e.g., Dorothy and Toto leaping down a yellow brick road of gambling that comes to a dead end), and oral or written language (e.g., "The person in the lobby carried our bags." Who is the person? Where are we?). When making inferences about oral or written text, readers combine clues from the text or the illustrations with their own prior knowledge. If the text or pictures do not hold sufficient clues, or if the reader or listener lacks related prior knowledge, a plausible inference cannot be made.

The need to make inferences is not a rare

occurrence. When we read we are constantly making inferences. Recently a study examined 10 quality children's picture books to determine the inferential demands placed on readers (Johnson, Johnson, Harms, & Lettow, 1997). The researchers were astounded by what they found. In the 10 books, readers would have to make more than 550 inferences to fully understand what the authors and illustrators intended for them. The authors of the study reported that in *The Rag Coat* (Mills, 1991), 75 inference opportunities were present, and in *Mirandy and Brother Wind* (McKissack, 1988), 74 inference elements occurred. By contrast, *Shortcut* (Crews, 1992) contained only 23 situations requiring inferences.

The 10 types of inferences listed previously together with inferences about story theme or story moral account for many of the inferences elementary students make; therefore, they are well worth teaching. The NAEP reading report shows that 62 percent of fourth-grade students cannot satisfactorily make inferences from written text

Referential Comprehension

Writers use word substitutes to add variety to their sentences and paragraphs. Speakers also do so as they produce language. Readers and listeners, therefore, must deal with referent words in almost everything they read or hear. In the sentences "*They* went to Frolicland. Maria and Max had a lot of thrills on the *amusement park's* twin roller coasters" *They* refers to Maria and Max, and

amusement park refers to Frolicland. Interpretive reading comprehension depends on the ability to process referential relationships such as these.

Chapman (1983) differentiated types of referential relationships. Exophora is a term he used for words or phrases that refer to something not mentioned specifically in the text but that exists outside it. Endophora is defined as words or phrases that refer to or substitute for words found within the text. There are two types of endophoric relationships: anaphora and cataphora. Anaphoric words are those that refer to or substitute for preceding words (e.g., "These *Ruby Wimer tomatoes* are tasty. *They* make last year's tomatoes seem like a crop of duds.") Cataphoric words are those that refer to or substitute for words yet to come (e.g., "*It* was too heavy to lift. The *grand piano* must weigh a ton.") We do not recommend confusing students with words such as *anaphora* or *cataphora*. Instead we suggest that teachers talk about words that substitute for or replace other words. The following are examples of referential words.

I. Noun substitutes
  A. pronouns
    1. personal

Joe and *Sheila* went to the store. *She* bought two candy bars and *he* bought an apple. *Sheila* and *Joe* are best friends. *They* always play together. (Who are *She, he,*

and *They*?)

2. demonstrative
"Look at all the *beads* they sell here," said Rod. "Yes," replied Tawana. "Look at *those*! And look at *these*! I've never seen anything like *them*!" (What are *those*, *these*, and *them*?)

3. other (who, whose, which, what, whoever, one,someone, etc.) *The problem of tardiness* is *one* that concerns me. (What is *one*?)

B. location
The family finally arrived at *the airport*. "*Here* we are," Dr. Lavoid said. (Where is *Here*?)

C. time
"I'm supposed to stay in during *recess*, but I want to go out and play *then*," said Lormai. (When is *then*?)

D. synonym
There is a small *boy* up in that tree branch. I hope the little *lad* doesn't fall! (Who is the *lad*?)

E. superordinate
The *taxi* slowly cruised past the two big hotels. Then *the vehicle* turned left on Cypress Street to go past the popular Cajun restaurant. (What is *the vehicle*?)

F. general term

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Robberies have been on the increase. The police just will have to do something about *the problem*. (What is *the problem*?)

G. arithmetic

Joyce and *Kenta* came into the faculty lounge. The *former* is tall, and the *latter* is very short. The *two* make an interesting *pair*. (Who is the *former*? Who is the *latter*? Who are the *two*? Who is the *pair*?)

II Verb substitutes (do, does, do the same, do likewise, do that, don't, so is, so has)

I don't *know these people*, but you *do*. (Do what?)

Petus *has a bad cold* and *so has* Ms. Moss. (Has what?)

Everyone started to *hiss and boo*, even though we were told not to *do that*. (Do what?)

III Clausal substitutes (so, not)

Will *Bobbie come over tomorrow*? I think *not*. (Will not what?)

Jalone *was very disappointed*, and she said *so*. (Said what?)

We recommend the use of stories for instruction with referential comprehension. In almost every paragraph such writing occurs. Simple questions, however, can do much to help students attune to these relationships (e.g., "What does *then* refer to in the story?" "What *vehicle*?" "What *problem*?"

"What does *do that* mean here?") (See Johnson, 1985 for a discussion of anaphoric comprehension.)

Critical Comprehension

A person who can read effortlessly but who cannot evaluate the accuracy or importance of what is read is not a thinking reader. Critical comprehension involves making judgments about what one reads. These judgments have to do with the acceptability, suitability, accuracy, intent, worth, point of view, or quality of what is read. If inferential and referential comprehension are thought of as reading "between the lines," then critical comprehension can be viewed as reading "beyond the lines." Six elements of critical comprehension are exemplified next. The first four are appropriate for students through fourth grade, given instructional help, exemplification, and demonstration from their teachers. Reutzel and Hollingsworth (1988) conducted a study to determine the effectiveness of systematic instruction with the inference types identified in the present article. They concluded:

> This study extended the findings of previous inference instructional research (activating prior knowledge and comprehension monitoring) to include a strategy which encouraged children to critically analyze a text for key vocabulary or relevant text-based information and integrate text information with their own knowledge through generative and reciprocal activities to improve inferential

comprehension. (p. 20)

1. Distinguishing between reality and fantasy. Which statement really could happen?
   The herd of elephants visited the salt lick.
   Three elephants flew a plane through the treetops.
2. Distinguishing between fact and opinion. Which statement is a fact?
   Since Wilma Miller was born, the world is a better place.
   Wilma Miller was born in Lafayette, Louisiana.
3. Detecting and evaluating bias. Which statement gives a positive image of Mr. Goodey?
   Mr. Goodey is a curious individual.
   Mr. Goodey is a nosy man.
4. Analyzing propaganda. What is implied here?
   Over seven million people watch "Shopping from Your Sofa" every Saturday night. You should join these smart shoppers! If you don't, what will people think?
5. Detecting fallacies of reasoning. Is this reasoning sound? Why or why not?
   Olive taught in Nigeria for three years.
   Nigeria has been governed by a military ruler.
   Olive, therefore, supports military dictatorships.
6. Assessing source credibility. Does B. A. Smith seem qualified to be the author?
   The Impact of Fiberoptics on Neurosurgery was written by B. A. Smith, the star pitcher for

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

the county Little League champions, the Turtle Lake Hardshells. In his spare time, Smith delivers the Barron County Bugle.

Inferential, referential, and critical comprehension are the three dimensions of interpretive comprehension with which the great majority of American fourth-graders have difficulties. We recommend that elementary school teachers direct renewed instructional effort in these areas.

A Generic Teaching Procedure

We conclude by describing a generic, three-part teaching procedure that is flexible, can be adapted for use with any interpretive comprehension task, and can meet many other curricular goals. Depending on the needs of the students and the complexity of the task, any of the three steps in the process can receive greater or lesser attention. Repetition of steps may occur as frequently as deemed necessary. The following example of the procedure uses "teaching students how to make inferences from written text" as its instructional goal.

Step 1. Introduction

The teacher introduces the instructional objective, process, or strategy by providing declarative, procedural, and conditional knowledge about it. (Paris, Lipson, & Wixson, 1983). In other words, through explanation, demonstration,

modeling, questioning, or problem-posing, the teacher wants students to understand:

what it is (declarative knowledge) "An inference is..."

how to do it (procedural knowledge) "You make an inference by..."

when and why to do it (conditional knowledge) "You make an inference when..."

Example: how to make inferences from written text

1. The teacher provides a definition of *inference*: "An inference is an understanding of something not said in the passage. An inference is like a good guess." (declarative)
2. The teacher introduces the formula: "text clues + prior knowledge = inference" and models this inference process (procedural):

"Why doesn't Carol visit her grandmother more?"

"Carol can't seem to find the time to visit her grandmother. In the winter, all she thinks about is skiing and ice hockey. In the spring and summer it's baseball and waterskiing. In the fall it's soccer. Carol needs to spend more time with her grandmother."

After reading the passage orally the teacher models the inference process by explaining that we are looking for text clues. The

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

teacher may say, "The words winter, spring, summer and fall are seasons. They fill the whole year. The words skiing, ice hockey, baseball, water skiing, and soccer are sports. Combined with my prior knowledge, I infer that Carol is too busy with sports all year to have time for her grandmother." This introductory modeling process may be repeated with as many passages as the teacher deems necessary for understanding.

3. The teacher explains that we make inferences every time we read, sometimes in every paragraph. If readers don't make the inferences, they can't fully understand the text. (conditional)

Step II. Guided Practice

In this step the teacher and students practice the process together. Either students or the teacher may read aloud a paragraph or short passage. The teacher then guides the students' practice by asking questions that lead to inference making.

Example: practice making inferences from written text.

1. The teacher reads or has someone read the target paragraph:

> "The center, in bright red and white, made the hook shot. As the buzzer sounded, the home fans screamed and cheered wildly with joy and relief. Most stayed nearly another

half hour singing chorus after chorus of the school fight song."

2. The teacher asks questions about the passage. For each question, student volunteers are to provide:
   a. the answer (which must be inferred)
   b. The type of inference required (action, location, feeling, etc.)
   c. the text or picture clues used to make the inference (center, buzzer, etc.).

   The following questions would lead to inferences about the above text:
   1. What was bright red?
   2. On whose team was the center?
   3. Who won the game?
   4. What game was being played?
   5. How many points for the center's shot?

   The guided practice step may be repeated with as many passages as seem necessary. Student inferences in answer to these questions may vary depending on their own experiences and world knowledge. For example,children in Canada and the northern states may infer that the game being played is hockey, others may infer that the game is basketball. It is not necessary that all inferences be the same ones. The crucial issue is having opportunities to engage in the inference-making process.

Step III. Transfer

In the final step the students must transfer the

procedure they have learned to authentic written materials, either fiction or nonfiction. This may be accomplished in small cooperative learning groups.

Example: In groups of three or four, have students locate inference needs, identify their types, and make the inferences using assigned or self-selected reading materials such as storybooks, stories in anthologies, magazine articles, or others.

1. The teacher assigns or has students select, in groups, a piece of informative, narrative, or persuasive writing (e.g., a chapter in a school book, an article in a newspaper, or samples of the student writing done in Step III.)
2. In groups, students decide where inferences need to be made, what their types are, and what the most plausible inferences would be.
3. Each group may share their findings with the remainder of the class and discuss the importance of inference making when reading.

This step may be repeated as frequently as needed.

The above procedure can be used effectively to teach any of the inferential, referential, or critical components of comprehension. Teachers find numerous ways to adapt or modify the procedure and choose to emphasize one step or another as needed.

Most American elementary school children do not read as well as we would like them to—at least as indicated by the fourth-grade data from the most recent NAEP report card. In this article we have reported what the assessments show is lacking, and

we have described what we believe needs to be taught. We have discussed three categories of interpretive comprehension and have given examples of their components. We have described a generic teaching procedure that can be used to teach interpretive comprehension. We hope some of what is contained herein may usefully find its way into some elementary classrooms. In beginning a new millennium, we teachers and professors must direct our instructional attention beyond the most basic level of reading comprehension and prepare students who can satisfy the sophisticated reading and writing demands of this information age.

References

American Federation of Teachers. (June, 1999). *Teaching reading is rocket science: What expert teachers of reading should know and be able to do* (No. 372). Washington, D. C.: Author.

Birkerts, S. (1994). *The Gutenberg elegies: The fate of reading in an electronic age*. New York: Fawcett Columbine.

Chapman, L. J. (1983). *Reading development and cohesion*. London: Heinemann Education Books.

Crews, D. (1992). *Shortcut*. New York: Greenwillow.

Furman, L., & Standard, E. (Eds.). (1997). *Bookworms: Great writers and readers celebrate reading*. New York: Carroll & Graf

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Publishers, Inc.

Gray, W. S. (1960). The major aspects of reading. In H. Robinson (Ed.), *Supplementary educational monongraphs* (90). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Johnson, D. D. (1985). Developing comprehension of anaphoric relationship. In T. L. Harris & E. J. Cooper (Eds.), *Reading, thinking and concept development* (pp.33-50). New York: College Board.

Johnson, D. D., Johnson, B. v., Harms, J. M., & Lettow, L. J. (1997). Inference opportunities in children's picture books. *Journal of Reading Education, 22* (3), 1-14.

McKissack, P. (1988). *Mirandy and brother wind.* New York: Knopf.

Mills, L. A. (1991). *The rag coat.* Boston: Little, Brown.

Paris, S. G., Lipson, M. Y., & Wixson, K. K. (1983). Becoming a strategic reader. *Contemporary educational psychology, 8,* 317-344.

Reutzel, D. R., & Hollingsworth, P. M. (1988, May). *Highlighting key vocabulary: A generative-reciprocal approach for teaching selected inference types.* Paper presented at the annual conference of the International Reading Association, Toronto.

Snow, C., Burns, S., & Griffin, P. (eds.). (1998) *Preventing reading difficulties in young children.* Washington, D. C.: National Academy Press.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

U. S. Department of Education. Office of Educational Research and Improvement. National Center for Education Statistics. *NAEP 1998 Reading Report Card for the Nation and the States*, NCES 1999-500, by P. L. Donahue, K. E. Voelkl, J. R. Campbell, and J. Mazzeo. Washington, D. C.: 1999.

U. S. Department of Education. Office of Educational Research and Improvement. National Center for Education Statistics. *The NAEP 1998 Writing Report Card for the Nation and the States*, NCES 1999-462, by E. A. Greenwald, H. R. Persky, J. R. Campbell, and J. Mazzeo. Washington, D. C.: 1999.

U. S. Department of Education. *What works: Research about teaching and learning* (2nd ed.). Author. Washington, D. C.: 1987.

Dr. Dale D. Johnson is the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Research, Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA

Dr. Bonnie von Hoff Johnson teaches in the Department of Curriculum, Instruction, and Leadership, Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA

The Reading Professor
1999, 22, (1) 124-126

EDITOR'S CORNER
INNOVATIVE PRACTICES AMONG EDUCATORS

An International Student Teaching Plan

The movement of students and scholars across community, cultural, geographic, and national boundaries has been recognized for centuries as essential to the discovery of truth, new knowledge, and the means of applying what is learned abroad to human survival and progress. International educational interchange, viewed traditionally as encouraging international scholarly development and fostering unofficial diplomatic communications, is increasingly linked to new global imperatives. These include the need to stabilize the world economy, halt damage to the physical environment and the supporting of life systems of the planet, deal with widespread assaults on human rights and cultural values, and cope with deepening world poverty and hunger. In light of these global realities, the free and open exchange of ideas, knowledge, and techniques internationally assumes an enlarged significance. The educational requirements of peoples in less developed societies, of women and others who have been systematically denied educational opportunity worldwide are, under these urgent circumstances, particularly compelling.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

In response to this global need, System initiatives to internationalize the curriculum, and the priorities of the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater Strategic Plan, the College of Education at UW-Whitewater has developed the 5-4-9 Plan, which includes five weeks of student teaching in Wisconsin, four weeks of international student teaching (to be performed in Jamaica during the pilot phase), and nine additional weeks of student teaching in Wisconsin. The goal of the Plan is to provide a teaching/cultural exchange program that compliments and adds value to the student teaching experience, while at the same time, providing a structure for on-going cultural exchanges and experiences between children in Wisconsin and children in other countries around the world. The Plan provides a short-term international student teaching experience embedded in the usual student teaching semester that will enhance the perspectives of student teachers about other cultures and teaching/learning systems. The Plan also provides American and non-American children with the opportunity to learn about diverse cultures and to share knowledge and learning experiences as a vehicle for greater understanding and mutual appreciation.

Dr Larry Kenney coordinates international activities in the College of Education. For further information, he may be contacted by e-mail at kenneyl@mail.uww.edu

Innovative Practices Among Educators is a regular column in each issue of *The Reading Professor*.

The editor invites members of PRTE to submit 2-3 page summaries of innovative projects that would be of interest to the readership.

The Reading Professor
1999, 22, (1) 127-131

Book Review

Dr. Maggie's Phonics Program. Margaret Allen, Ph.D. 1999. Creative Teaching Press, Inc./Youngheart Music (15342 Graham Street, Huntington Beach, CA 926490-1111, USA).
The Classroom Phonics Kit 144 books. Resource guide. 24 chant charts. $499.00
The Resource Guide ISBN 1-57471-530-5. Softcover. 160 pages. $15.98.

The headline in an advertisement that appeared in a recent issue of a popular teaching magazine read, "Does your phonics program need a shot in the arm?" According to Creative Teaching Press, ***Dr. Maggie's Phonics Readers Series*** is the medicine. This product is new to the marketplace and is a series of twenty-four 16-page stories rooted in current phonics research accompanied by a resource guide that contains lesson plans and teaching strategies for phonics instruction.

The combination of lessons in the guide and the 24 phonics readers embodies Dr. Maggie's view of phonics instruction in three ways. First, it acknowledges children's recognition of sounds prior to their understanding of letter/sound associations. Beginning with the first book of the series, *I Spy* children are presented with commonly

used consonants: /m/, /f/, /s/, /r/, /h/, /t/, /c/ and one vowel /a/. By practicing with these letters, children catch on to what letters represent, how letters and sounds combine to make words, and how to blend letters and sounds to read words. Second, the program incorporates multimodal learning experiences. In Dr. Maggie's program, children learn basic phonics knowledge through a total body response activities such as chanting, singing, physical movement, and active games. Third, the program contains a progression of skills that build upon one another from one book to the next in a natural literature context. Young readers learn a well-defined scope of phonics skills, put these skills into action as they read each high-interest stories, and review the skills in subsequent books to ensure that the concepts are retained.

The ***Dr. Maggie's Phonics Resource Guide*** is a 160-page guide containing complete, detailed lesson plans for all 24 books in the series. Each lesson in the guide is divided into four sections: *Ready*, *Read*, *Review*, *Reinforce*.

The *Ready* section contains ideas including phonemic awareness, print awareness, and sound blending strategies for preparing readers. These activities are centered on a rhythmic chant that introduces key vocabulary. The chants are available as reproducibles in the resource guide and as large charts in the classroom kit.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The *Read* section recommends methods for introducing the story and procedures for guiding readers through shared reading, partner reading, or independent reading of the book.

The *Review* section invites readers to revisit the book's story line and practice phonics skills, sound blending, and other word work.

The *Reinforce* section contains activities readers complete independently to extend or enrich the learning from the book. These ideas create learning centers at which readers can practice games, concepts, and skills learned during the earlier portions of the lesson.

Here is a more detailed description of a lesson from ***Hap and Cap*** (Book 2) with the focus skills /p/, /n/, /a/. All lessons list three sets of new words: focus-skill words, words with a new sound such as can, tap, mat; sight words, common words appearing for the first time such as but, said, here; and story words, words that add interest to the story such as fast.

The lesson begins with a transition activity using an overhead projector that involves active student participation such as students finding and matching letters, followed by identifying focus skill and sight words from Book 1. Then , the *Ready* portion of the lesson includes the rhythmic chant to be sung again and again. For ***Hap and Cap***, there are thirteen steps to follow including a phonemic awareness

strategy (designated by a square), a letter/word awareness strategy (a circle), and a blending strategy (a diamond).

When the children have had sufficient practice with the rhythmic chant, can recognize most new sight words, and seem confident, they are ready to read ***Hap and Cap***. In the *Read* phase, the teacher demonstrates a metacognitive coaching strategy (a triangle) by thinking aloud the -ap phonogram. Through the seven steps of the *Read* stage, the children read individual copies of ***Hap and Cap*** in small groups or in verse choir style.

Next, the children blend the onsets with the -ap rime using colored linking cubes during the *Review* stage. Because these are not included in the kit, the teacher must make them. Another review game involves TV dinner trays and alphabet cards made from the reproducible pages in the ***Dr. Maggie's Phonics Resource Guide.***

The final part of the lesson, *Reinforce*, includes directions for five centers: library center with copies of ***Hap and Cap***, alphabet/word study center with the linking cubes and blending trays, overhead projector center, pocket chart center, and chant the song and poem center with the rhythmic chant the focus for the latter three centers.

While implementing this lesson, an experienced first grade teacher was confused about the symbols and about the time frame. She questioned whether

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

she needed to complete all 13 steps of the *Ready* section before continuing to the 7 steps of the *Read* section. One concern for this teacher was the extensive use of the overhead projector. As she said, she uses one in her classroom; however, many teachers do not. Also, she would want all of the components of the classroom kit, not just the resource guide.

In comparing this phonics program with others on the market, it is somewhat unique because it incorporates phonics, music, rhythm, and rhyme into learning. If teachers of beginning readers are comfortable with music and movement in their classrooms, they will find ***Dr. Maggie's Phonics Program*** a usable product.

The ***Classroom Phonics Kit*** is designed for small group instruction. It includes a six-pack of each of the 24 phonics readers (144 books in all), a resource guide, and 24 chant charts with word cards on the back. These materials are packaged in a durable, storage box. (CTP 2926 $499.00).

The ***Dr. Maggie's Phonics Resource Guide*** is a companion to the phonics series. It includes detailed background information regarding phonics instruction, a collection of comprehensive activities for each reader and a collection of reproducibles. 166 pages. (CTP 2925 $15.98).

The reviewer, Dr. Susan Blair-Larsen, may be reached at The College of New Jersey in Ewing, NJ.

The Reading Professor
1999, 22, (1) 132-133

Book Review

Cabell's Directory of Publishing Opportunities in Education (5th edition) by David W. E. Cabell (editor). Texas: Cabell Publishing Company, 1998-99. Two Volumes $89.95.

David Cabell's two volume Directory of Publishing Opportunities in Education is a comprehensive work that addresses the issue of 'getting published' in refereed educational journals. From the table of contents, the reader gets an overview of the breadth of this work. Now in its fifth edition, it is undoubtedly the most extensive directory of its kind in education. If educators have articles intended for publication, this directory lists over 440 journals each with specific requirements for publication.

The directory is organized into two volumes. In Volume I, as well as listing the individual journals, Cabell provides information on how to use the directory in pursuit of that 'published article'. Included in this introduction are some useful tips ranging from choosing the right journal to what to do if rejected.

Volume II includes an index that lists twenty-seven (27) different specialities (e.g. Reading, Teacher Education, Curriculum Studies), and the journals that focus on these areas. Both volumes are

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

organized alphabetically by journal title. Each entry is in a consistent format that presents the editorial and publishing policies of the journal. Included are: the address for submissions; circulation data; publication guidelines; review information; timelines, and manuscript topics. Of particular interest here are the insights into the readership of the journal (e.g. teachers, academics, administrators), and the acceptance rate for submitted manuscripts. A scan of the index at the back of Volume II shows that some acceptance rates are as low as 0-5%, others as high as 80%.

Cabell's Directory succeeds in presenting a wide range of publishing opportunities for educators. It is recommended for inclusion in University, College, and School Board Libraries.

The reviewers for this book, Drs. Eileen Winter and William McEachern, can be reached at Nippising University, North Bay, Ontario in Canada.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Professors of Reading
Teacher Educators

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 798
Dubuque, IA 52001

137

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND
DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS
BEEN GRANTED BY

L. Kenney

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

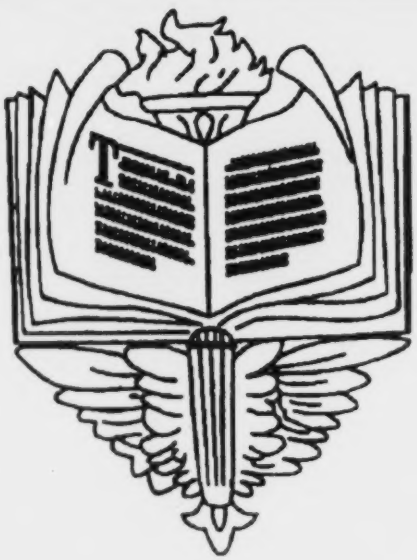
1

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.



THE READING PROFESSOR

Publication Forum for Professors of Reading Teacher Educators

Volume XXII, No. 2
Spring 2000

THE READING PROFESSOR

The Journal of Professors of Reading Teacher Educators: A Special Interest Group of the International Reading Association

Editor Lawrence M. Kenney, University of Wisconsin Whitewater, Wisconsin
Associate Editor Marie C. Roos, Jackson State University Jackson, Mississippi

Editorial Advisory Board

Lois A. Bader, Michigan State University, East Lansing
Rita M. Bean, University of Pittsburgh
Allen Berger, Miami University, Oxford, OH
Susan Blair-Larsen, The College of New Jersey, Ewing
Mary Campbell, Saint Xavier University of Chicago
Sharon R. Gill, Murray State University, Murray, KY
Monica Gordon Pershey, Cleveland State University, Cleveland, OH
Ruth Hayden, University of Alberta, Canada
Joyce A. Hieshima, Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago
Amy R. Hoffman, John Carroll University, Cleveland, OH
Jeanne M. Jacobson, Hope College, Holland, Michigan
Dale D. Johnson, Louisiana Tech University, Ruston, LA
June Knafle, University of Illinois, Chicago
William R. McEachern, Nipissing University, North Bay, Ontario, Canada
Jesse C. Moore, East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania, East Stroudsburg, PA
Daniel Pearce, Texas A & M University, Corpus Christi
Marie C. Roos, Jackson State University, Jackson, MS
Barbara A. Schaudt, California State University/Bakersfield

Anthony J. Scheffler, Northwestern State University of Louisiana, Natchitoches
Barbara Schneider, Grand Valley State University, Grand Valley, MI
Gerry Shiel, St. Patrick's College, Dublin, Ireland
Terrence Stange, Arkansas State University, State University, AR
Sandra M. Stokes, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay
Katherine Wiesendanger, Alfred University, Alfred, NY

Professors of Reading Teacher Educators

Manuscripts for Journal
Dr. Larry Kenney
Winther 2040
College of Education
UW-Whitewater
Whitewater, WI 53190
Telephone 262-472-4677
Fax 262-472-5716
E-mail kenneyl@mail.uww.edu

Membership
Dr. Jesse Moore
10 Kiwanis Street
East Stroudsburg, PA 18301
570-422-3751
Fax 570-422-3920
E-mail jmoore@po-box.esu.edu

Canadian Membership
Dr. William R. McEachern
Nipissing University
Box 5002
100 College Drive
North Bay, Ontario
K2P1C8
Canada
705 474-3461, ext. 4567

Newsletter Articles
Dr. Terrence V. Stange
Department of Elementary Education, Reading
Arkansas State University
P.O. Box 2350
State University, AR 72467
870-972-3059
Fax 870-972-3828
E-mail tstange@kiowa.astate.edu

PRTE Program at IRA Convention
Dr. Marie Roos
Curriculum and Instruction
Box 18380
Jackson State University
Jackson, MS 39217
Telephone 601-853-7817
Fax same as above
E-mail MCR308@aol.com

GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS

The Reading Professor seeks manuscripts dealing with topics, issues and events of interest to professors of reading. Authors are encouraged to submit articles and/or research studies that are directed toward the improvement of reading instruction at all levels of education. All authors must be members of both IRA and PRTE.

PREPARING AND SUBMITTING MANUSCRIPTS

Manuscripts should be typed and double-spaced (including references). The author's name, full address, and the date the manuscript is submitted should appear only on the cover page of each manuscript. Every effort should be made to avoid inclusion of the author's identity in any portion of the manuscript in order to secure an impartial view.

Send four copies of each manuscript to the editor. A word processor should be used; Microsoft Word 7.0 in IBM format is mandatory. Please print final copies using a letter-quality printer. If the manuscript is rejected, the author may request that a copy of the manuscript be returned; in that case, stamps for the return of the manuscript should be sent. If references are included, they should be cited in the article by name and date, for example, (Shantz, 1998). References at the end of the article should follow the format used in the International Reading Association journals, i.e., APA style, 1994.

EVALUATION OF MANUSCRIPTS

Upon receipt of a manuscript, the editor first prescreens it and sends an acknowledgment to the author. Manuscripts are evaluated by at least three reviewers who are uninformed as to the identity of the author. Manuscripts are evaluated in terms of interest, quality of writing, appropriate documentation of ideas, uniqueness, and needs of the journal. A decision on the manuscript is usually reached within two months. Manuscripts

submitted are assumed to be previously unpublished and not under consideration by any other publication. Accepted manuscripts may be edited to promote clarity and to improve organization.

Manuscripts and correspondence regarding editorial matters should be addressed to Dr. Kenney, Editor.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRTE Contact Individuals..... 3 – 4

Guidelines for Authors ..... 5 – 6

Digital Literacy Portfolio Series: Purpose, Development, Implementation..... 8 – 25
Elizabeth Baker

An Answer to the Shortage of Secondary Reading Teacher Educators..... 26 – 37
Gloria A. Neubert

Identifying Evaluation Norms of Reading Faculty in Higher Education..... 38 – 54
Mary B. Campbell

Voices From the Field: Preservice Teachers' Cases as Sources of Information for Field-Based Teacher Preparation..... 55 – 79
Janet C. Richards
Joan P. Gipe

Content Area Reading: Why Do I have to Take This Class..... 80 - 88
Patricia Luse Smith

Editor's Corner..... 89 - 94

Book Reviews..... 95 - 98

ISSN 1066-2839

The Reading Professor
2000, 22, (2) 8-25

DIGITAL LITERACY PORTFOLIO SERIES: PURPOSE, DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION

Elizabeth Baker

Teacher education has been criticized for its ineffectiveness (Feiman-Nemser, & Buchmann, 1985; Goodlad, Soder, & Sirotnik, 1990; Zeichner & Tabachnik, 1984). It is argued that teachers do not begin to learn about how to teach until after they begin teaching. In other words, traditional models of teacher education have serious limitations (Zeichner & Liston, 1987). Case-based instruction (CBI) is one method being used to overcome these criticisms. In literacy education, several different types of cases are being developed and used. The purpose of this paper is to discuss the theoretical basis for using CBI to address concerns about the ineffectiveness of teacher preparation, discuss cases being used in literacy education, and describe a new set of cases for literacy education: the Digital Literacy Portfolio Series (DLPS).

Case-based Instruction: Addressing Teacher Preparation Concerns

Risko and Kinzer (1994) propose a theoretical framework which addresses difficulties encountered while preparing teachers. They discuss how

theories of **anchored instruction** (Cognition and Technology Group at Vanderbilt, 1990) suggest that learners benefit from discussions when they share common experiences. For example, literacy teachers who work in the same classroom benefit from the ability to discuss their common experience, their particular classroom. Their classroom becomes the anchor of their discussions. However, providing a similar anchor during teacher education courses is a challenge. It is difficult to place 20-35 college students in the same elementary classroom so they will have a common classroom experience to discuss. With CBI, the learners' common experience is a case. Because the learners are familiar with the same cases, they can discuss how their different field experiences are similar and dissimilar to the case. Herein, the learners can gain an understanding of one another's divergent field experiences and potentially help one another understand each other's field situations.

Research indicates that effective teachers **reflect** on their practice (Schon, 1983; Zeichner & Tabachnik, 1984). In other words, they ask themselves questions such as:

- Are my teaching methods and materials effective?
- How can I improve my instruction to meet the needs of my students?
- What can I do differently?
- What teaching methods and materials work for which students?
- What information am I lacking and where will I find it?

Many teacher preparation programs have identified reflection as a desirable characteristic of preservice teachers and have incorporated goals and experiences aimed at fostering reflection. Typically, reflection is addressed through field experiences. However, due to differences in field experiences (i.e. different teachers, classrooms, and schools) it is difficult for instructors or peers to give feedback about the nature of preservice teachers' reflective thought. Consequently, preservice teachers are left to develop their own reflection skills. Given CBI, peers can compare their field experiences with the cases (see discussion about anchored instruction) and potentially help one another reflect on their divergent field experiences.

Theories of **situated cognition** argue that "knowledge is situated, being in part a product of the activity, context, and culture in which it is developed and used" (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989, p. 32). In terms of teacher education, just because preservice teachers demonstrate the knowledge to pass tests and write papers about teaching children to read, does not mean they will be able to teach children to read. Research on situated cognition indicates that if we learn knowledge in situations similar to where we will use the knowledge, we are more likely to transfer the knowledge into practice (Greeno, Smith, & Moore, 1993). Theories of situated cognition imply that field experiences are vital for preservice teachers. However, without anchored situations, preservice teachers are limited to their own insights and making their own connections between

coursework and practice. Due to the common experiences provided by CBI, peers can generate and discuss these connections with the potential of implementing them in the field.

Theories of **generative knowledge** argue that learners do not commonly make connections between knowledge that is dispensed to them (i.e., via lectures) and situations where that knowledge can be used. (Bransford, Franks, Vye, & Sherwood, 1989; Bereiter, & Scardamalia, 1985; Whitehead, 1929). Instead, learners make better connections when they generate knowledge (Risko, McAllister, Peter, & Bigenho, 1994). CBI purposely requires learners to generate their analyses of the cases (Christensen, 1987; Christensen, Garvin, & Sweet, 1991; Merseth, 1997; Shulman, 1992; Silverman & Welty, 1992). Instructors do not lecture about the cases. Rather, the learners are expected to articulate their analyses and challenge one another's analyses.

Teaching is an **ill-structured** task (Clark, 1988; Greeno & Leinhardt, 1986). This means that teachers need to be able to make decisions based on constantly changing sources of information. Field experiences give preservice teachers opportunities to try methods discussed in courses, but little experience in dealing with the ill-structured, complex nature of teaching. Furthermore, the ill-structured nature of teaching requires preservice teachers to understand the viability of different perspectives. Unlike standard content where there are right and wrong answers (i.e., what date did Apollo land on the moon), teaching involves different perspectives based on a variety of values,

diverse backgrounds, and assorted theories of learning (see Ruddell, Ruddell, & Singer, 1994). Preservice teachers must understand and respect the perspectives held by parents, administrators, and other teachers in order to communicate effectively with them. Experience with these divergent perspectives is difficult to acquire in traditional education courses and even field placements. CBI addresses this need by requiring learners to identify alternate explanations to the case and role play potential perspectives held by parents, administrators, and other teachers.

Cases Used In Literacy Education

In this section, I discuss three types of cases being used in literacy education. The first type uses anecdotal stories to highlight dilemmas literacy teachers may encounter (Silverman & Welty, 1992). For example, one of these cases tells of a student teacher who works with a special education cooperating teacher. The school district decides that all students must participate in state-wide testing. The cooperating teacher feels that such participation will be detrimental to her special needs students. During the state testing, the student teacher notices that the cooperating teacher gives subtle assistance to her students. Herein the case ends in a dilemma: Should the student teacher report her cooperating teacher for cheating on the state-wide tests? The users of such cases are able to discuss multiple perspectives on what the student teacher should do. While this is only one example

of many anecdotal story cases, it highlights that these cases end in a dilemma for the users to discuss.

Another type of case used in literacy education are stories written by teachers about their experiences (Avery, 1993; Atwell, 1987; Harp, 1993, Routman, 1994). Unlike the anecdotal cases, these cases tell many facets of literacy classrooms. They may include the teacher's philosophy of literacy education, how they deal with children's grapho/phonic development, how they group children, how they arrange their classrooms and schedules, and how they keep track of children's literacy development. These cases are commonly 100-300 pages long. They do not purposely end with dilemmas for discussion. Rather, the readers generate their own topics for discussion. For example, they may discuss whether they would allow children to use invented spelling.

The third type involves a range of digital cases. The Reading Classroom Explorer (RCE), "is a searchable (by school, broad theme, and/or keyword) database of digitized video clips" from a video series of five literacy classrooms which represent "students from diverse cultural, linguistic, and intellectual backgrounds" (Hughes, Packard, and Pearson, 1999, p. 1). RCE includes voice-overs by the teacher who explains what she is doing in the video and why. RCE also includes interviews with the teachers who discuss such topics as child development, integrated curriculum, communication with parents, and administrative support. Research indicates that the more time

literacy teachers spent examining video cases, the better they were able to support their claims about teaching reading (Hughes, Packard, & Pearson).

The Multimedia Cases in Teacher Education (MCTE) allows users to watch a 20 or so minute video of a literacy teacher's classroom (Kinzer & Risko, 1998). The users can then watch video interviews with the teacher in the case, other teachers in the school, the principal, parents of students in the case, and literacy professors who have watched the same 20 minute video of the classroom. Herein, the users are able to watch the same literacy classroom and discuss what they see happen. They might discuss literacy skills, activities the teacher uses to teach and reinforce literacy skills, classroom organization, behavior management, and so forth. The interface allows users to mark places in the videos that they want to revisit for their own analysis or for class discussion. It also allows users to enter information about their readings and create links to the video. This series of cases includes different grade levels and different special needs situations (e.g., resource and inclusion). The users are able to compare between and among grade levels and special needs. Risko, Yount, & McAllister (1992) found that literacy teachers who examined multimedia cases during class asked more questions and more higher level questions than students in similar courses who did not use the cases. They also found that the students enrolled in CBI courses developed the ability to take multiple perspectives on various teaching issues and problems much earlier than their peers

enrolled in similar non-CBI courses. In another study, Risko, Peter, & McAllister (1996) found that CBI had an impact on the students' ability to think flexibly in related field experiences and discussions in other courses. Another example of digital cases is the Digital Literacy Portfolio Series (DLPS).

Digital Literacy Portfolio Series

Distinct from other literacy cases

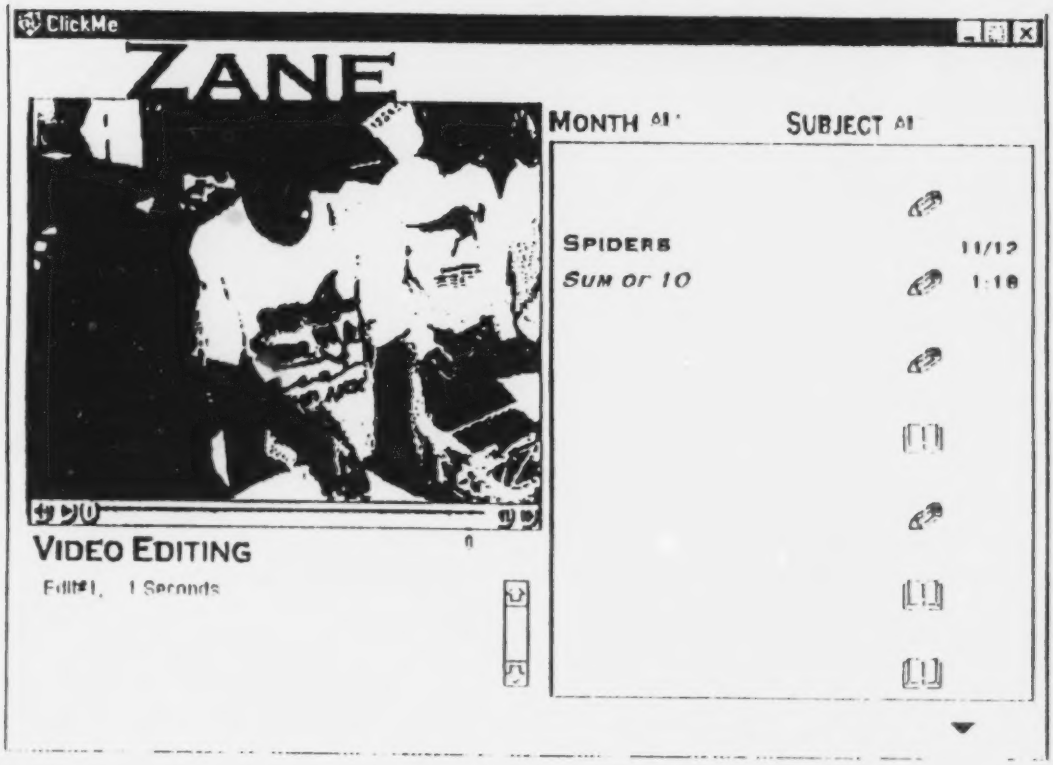
While anecdotal cases, book cases, RCE cases, and MCTE cases provide opportunities for anchored instruction, reflective thinking, preservice teachers to generate discussion, situated learning, and help preservice literacy teachers understand the complex decisions necessary to set up an effective literacy program (Hughes, Packard, and Pearson, 1999; Risko, Peter, & McAllister, 1996; Risko, Yount, & McAllister, 1992), they focus on **teachers** and how they set up literacy programs and provide literacy instruction. We developed the Digital Literacy Portfolio Series in order to foster **kidwatching** (Wilde, 1996). We wanted to encourage preservice literacy teachers to begin their instructional plans with the needs of the children they teach in mind. Furthermore, first year teachers are expected to analyze and understand children's **literacy growth** throughout a school year. However, most preservice teachers have never watched children develop over extended periods of time. Preservice teachers can focus on children's growth during extended field placements (i.e., student teaching). However, the amount of time it

takes for a child to make substantive literacy development may extend beyond a college semester—thus limiting preservice teachers' opportunities to identify and analyze children's growth. Unless preservice teachers are given experience with analyzing children's growth, they remain unprepared for their first teaching position. Finally, first year teachers need to be able to understand their students' **diverse** language cultures and abilities. One way to develop this understanding is to gain experience with the literacy development of children who are from diverse language groups and have diverse literacy abilities. The DLPS includes bilingual Asian children, African American children, and European American children.

DLPS Interface

The interface (see Figure 1) gives users access to video segments of the child as s/he reads and writes with classmates, the teacher, and the principal investigators. Each video segment includes related artifacts. For example, if the video involves a child reading, then the artifact is the book that is being read. This allows the user to see what the child saw while s/he was reading. If the video involves a child writing, then the artifact is the writing sample that s/he wrote. This allows the user to see what the child wrote. Each video also includes a scenario which explains what happened before and after the video. The scenario includes the text from the book in the video so the user can

Figure 1. Digital Literacy Portfolio Series Interface provides access to videos of children as they read and write with peers and their teacher. The interface also provides access to the books the child reads, the artifacts the child wrote, and an explanation of why the child was reading and writing in each segment



mark what the child says when s/he tries to read the text. The video segments (with corresponding artifacts and scenarios) can be sorted by month and by content area (e.g., literature, social studies, science, and math) so the users can either examine the child's literacy abilities across time or across content areas. The interface also allows users to mark video segments so they can randomly access these segments during case analysis and class discussions (see Figure 1).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Case-based Instruction with DLPS

So far, we have used the DLPS for two semesters in a course entitled Emergent Literacy for Elementary Education majors. The course is part of a block of literacy courses which include 2 semester hours of Children's Literature, 2 semester hours of Emergent Language, and 3 semester hours of Emergent Literacy for Elementary Teachers. These preservice teachers also participate in 2 semester hours of field experience in which they work with a partner to teach 8-10 literacy lessons to a small group of elementary children. They collaborate with the elementary children's teacher to design, implement, and reflect on their lessons and the progress of the children's literacy abilities. The participants take this block of literacy courses as a cohort. In other words, the same group of preservice teachers attend Children's Literature, Emergent Language, Emergent Literacy and Literacy Field Experience (9 hours per week) together.

The course is divided into three modules in the following order: children's literacy processes, teacher decision-making, and professional development. Each module takes approximately five weeks. During the first module, we focus on kidwatching. During class, I tell the preservice teachers that as teachers they will watch children write, collect their writing samples, and listen to children read. However, they will encounter a dilemma: what should they look for while children write? What should they notice in the writing samples? What do they listen for while a child

reads? How do they keep track of children's growth over time? The preservice teachers read from texts of their choice to address these dilemmas. For homework, they also examine portions of the DLPS to begin practicing kidwatching. This begins a five week discussion of cueing systems and informal assessment techniques. During the second module, we focus on making instructional decisions for the children they examined in the first module. Again, the preservice teachers read from texts of their choice to explore issues related to instructional approaches, classroom management, literacy activities, and theories of literacy instruction. During the third module, the preservice teachers identify topics they want to learn more about and develop their own independent project. Sometimes they use the DLPS for these projects, but they are not required to do so.

Preliminary Results of Using the DLPS

Through naturalistic data collection and analyses, we have found that case-based instruction with the DLPS fosters anchored instruction, reflective thinking, situated cognition, generative learning, and the ability that CBI had to prepare teachers to deal with the ill-structured nature of teaching. However, the quality of these discussions is currently being analyzed with preliminary mixed results. For example, while the students generated from 42%-100% of the discussion, they generated both accurate and inaccurate observations of the children's literacy abilities as well as traditional forms of instruction. They were reflective about

children's literacy abilities but not about instructional approaches. They valued diverse opinions about how to kidwatch and how to teach the DLPS children but wanted to know what theories of literacy instruction were right. Future reports will be able to provide greater insights into the effectiveness of using DLPS for case-based instruction.

Discussion

Case-based instruction is offering exciting new options for the preparation of literacy teachers. I encourage other literacy professors to peruse the different types of cases available to them because they each offer different strengths. For example, the anecdotal cases offer opportunities to explore moral dilemmas that teachers may encounter. The book cases allow readers to get into the psyche of the author and discuss whether they agree or disagree with the author. RCE and MCTE offer random access to multiple literacy classrooms whereby the users can compare and contrast teachers' instructional decisions. The DLPS offers opportunities to explore kidwatching, children's literacy development, and instructional decisions based on the users' kidwatching observations. Literacy professors may find that one type of case meets their needs or that a combination of these types is useful. Literacy professors may also find areas which still need to be developed into cases. Further development of literacy cases will provide richer opportunities to preservice literacy teachers

richer opportunities to preservice literacy teachers as teacher educators continue to seek avenues for improving teacher preparation.

Dr. Baker would like to thank members of the team who helped to develop and implement the DLPS: Judy Wedman, Kyeong-Hee Rha, Roger Wen, Herbert Remidez, and Karen Sherwood. This work was supported by the U. S. Department of Education, Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (Project Number P116B71861). You should not assume endorsement of the ideas expressed herein by the USED/FIPSE.

References

Atwell, N. (1987). *In the middle: Writing, reading, and learning with adolescents*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Avery, C. (1993). *And with a light touch: Learning about reading, writing, and teaching with first graders*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Bereiter, C. & Scardamalia, M. (1985). Cognitive coping strategies and the problem of "inert" knowledge. In S. F. Chipman, J. W. Segal, & R. Glaser (Eds.), *Thinking and learning skills: Current research and open questions* (Vol. 2, pp. 65-80). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Bransford, J. D., Franks, J. J., Vye, N. J., & Sherwood, R. D. (1989). New approaches to instruction: Because wisdom can't be told. In S. Vosniadou & A. Ortony (Eds.), Similarity

and analogical reasoning. (pp. 470-497). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Brown, J. S., Collins, A., & Duguid, P. (1989). Situated cognition and the culture of learning. *Educational Researcher, 17,* 32-41.

Christensen, C. R. (1987). Teaching with cases at the Harvard Business School. In C. R. Christensen (Ed.), *Teaching and the case method* (pp 16-49). Boston, MA: Harvard Business School.

Christensen, C. R., Garvin, D. A., & Sweet, A. (Eds.). (1991). *Education for Judgement: The artistry of discussion leadership.* Harvard Business School: Boston, Massachusetts.

Clark, C. M. (1988). Asking the right questions about teacher preparation: Contributions of research on teacher thinking. *Educational Researcher, 17,* 5-13.

Cognition and Technology Group (CTG) at Vanderbilt (1990). Anchored instruction and its relationship to situated cognition. *Educational Researcher, 19,* 2-10.

Dewey, J. (1933). *How we think.* Boston: D.C. Heath.

Feiman-Nemser, S. & Buchmann, M. (1985). Pitfalls of experience in teacher preparation. *Teachers College Record, 87* (1), 53-65.

Goodlad, J. I., Soder, R., & Sirotnik, K. A. (1990). *Places where teachers are taught.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Greeno, J. G. & Leinhardt, G. (1986). The cognitive skill of teaching. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 78* (2), 75-95.

Greeno, J. G., Smith, D. R., & Moore, J. L. (1993). Transfer of situated learning. In D. K. Detterman & R. J. Sternberg (Eds.), *Transfer on trial: Intelligence, cognition, and instruction* (pp. 99-167). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Harp, B. (1993). *Bringing children to literacy: Classrooms at work.* Christopher-Gordon Publishers: Norwood, Massachusetts.

Hughes, J. E., Packard, B. W, & Pearson, P. D. (1999). The role of hypermedia cases on preservice teachers' views of reading instruction. (CIERA Rep. No. 3-005). Ann Arbor, MI: Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement.

Kinzer, C. K., & Risko, V. J. (1998). Multimedia and enhanced learning: Transforming preservice education. In D. Reinking, M. McKenna, L. Labbo, & r. Kieffer (Eds.), *Handbook of literacy and technology: Transformations in a post-typographic world* (pp. 185-202). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Merseth, K. K. (1997). *Case Studies in Educational Administration.* New York: Longman.

Risko, V. J. & Kinzer, C. K. (1994). *Improving teacher education through dissemination of videodisc-based case procedures and influencing the teaching of future college professionals.* (Application number P116A40242). Washington, DC: Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education.

Risko, V. J., McAllister, D., Peter, J., & Bigenho, F. (1994). Using technology in support of

preservice teachers' generative learning. In E. C. Sturtevant & W. M. Linek (Eds.), *Pathways for literacy: Learners teach and teachers learn* (pp. 155-167). Pittsburg, KS: College Reading Association.

Risko, V. J., Peter, J., & McAllister, D. (1996). Conceptual changes: Preservice teachers' pathways to providing literacy transaction. In E. Sturtevant & W. Linek (Eds.), *Literacy grows* (pp. 103-119). Pittsburg, KS: College Reading Association.

Risko, V. J., Yount, D., & McAllister, D. (1992). Preparing preservice teachers for remedial instruction: Teaching problem solving and use of content and pedagogical knowledge. In N. Padak, T. V. Rasinski, J. Logan (Eds.), *Inquiries in literacy learning and instruction* (pp 179-189). Pittsburg, KS: College Reading Association.

Routman, R. (1994). *Invitations: Changing as teachers and learners K-12.* Portsmouth, NH: Heineman.

Ruddell, R. B., Ruddell, M. R. & Singer, H. (1994). *Theoretical models and processes of reading (4th ed.).* Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Schon, D. (1983). *The reflective practitioner.* New York: Basic.

Shulman, L. (1992). Toward a pedagogy of cases. In J. Shulman (Ed.), *Case methods in teacher education* (pp. 1-30). New York: Teachers College Press.

Silverman, R. & Welty, B. (1992) . *Education: Case studies for teacher problem solving.* New York: McGraw-Hill Primis.

VanManen, M. (1977). Linking ways of knowing with ways of being practical. *Curriculum Inquiry, (6) 3,* 205-228.

Whitehead, A. N. (1929). *The aims of education.* New York: Macmillan.

Wilde, S. (Ed.). (1996). *Notes from a Kidwatcher: Selected Writings of Yetta M. Goodman.* Portsmouth, NH: Heineman.

Zeichner, K., & Liston, D. (1987). Teaching student teachers to reflect. *Harvard Educational Review, 57,* 23-48.

Zeichner, K. M. & Tabachnik, B. R. (1984). Social strategies and institutional control in the socialization of beginning teachers. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans.

Dr. Elizabeth Baker teaches at the University of Missouri-Columbia where she may be contacted.

The Reading Professor
2000, 22, (2) 26-37

AN ANSWER TO THE SHORTAGE OF SECONDARY READING TEACHER EDUCATORS

Gloria A. Neubert

Because reading is an essential skill across all content areas and all grade levels, every teacher is challenged to promote literacy. Lagging growth in . . . reading scores and poor performance on the National Assessment of Educational Progress reading test underscore our need to ensure that every teacher is equipped with the tools needed to diagnose reading problems and help students overcome this enormous obstacle to learning.

Maryland State Department of Education

With this appropriate basis for their action, the Maryland State Department of Education passed in July 1998 new initial certification and renewal regulations regarding the number of reading credits teachers would need. The amendments require all prospective and current Maryland teachers to have a minimum of 12 semester hours in reading for elementary certification and a minimum of 6 semester hours in reading for middle school, high school, N-12 and special education certification.

At my university, the largest producer of teachers in the state, this change in certification

requirements represented a major challenge for my department of secondary education. Currently our students (liberal arts majors--math, science, English, social studies, health--and special education majors) take 3 semester hours (one course) in reading. N-12 majors (physical education, music, art) are not required to take any reading courses. With these new certification regulations, our reading classes for initial certification students would now double the number of courses students would take and the number of students required to take the courses. In estimated numbers, we would go from offering **one** reading course to 60 teacher candidates each semester to offering **two** reading courses for approximately 100 students each semester. Additionally in the next decade, inservice teachers would be registering for our courses in record numbers in order to renew their certifications by taking one or both reading courses.

The challenge to our secondary department was how to find qualified faculty to teach these secondary reading courses. Currently I am the only secondary reading professor at my university. The faculty position we hope to fill with another secondary reading instructor will not come to fruition until next academic year and even then will still not cover all the reading sections we need. The answer for the immediate future of our program appeared to rely on hiring qualified adjunct instructors who would each teach one section of the two secondary reading courses in the late afternoon or evening, but inquiries and advertisements

revealed that few qualified individuals were available.

Reading Leadership Institute

The idea for the Reading Leadership Institute resulted from this urgent need to have a pool of trained adjunct instructors for our university courses, as well as to serve the local school systems by providing them with secondary reading specialists who could offer local inservice courses to meet the new reading requirements. I was motivated by the historically-validated belief that universities and schools can and must work together as partners in order to develop successful preservice and inservice staff development which would result in improved reading performance of students at all levels of education. With the technical assistance of our college outreach coordinator, I invited each of eight neighboring school districts to send 1-4 secondary reading specialists to the Institute. I wanted professionals who already had graduate training in reading, were currently working in secondary schools, and whom school systems viewed as viable candidates to serve as teacher trainers.

The Institute was advertised as a six-credit graduate course having two focuses: 1) updating participants on theory, research and practice in reading-to-learn at the secondary school levels; and 2) preparing, practicing and refining presentations to be used in the state-mandated courses participants would eventually teach as adjunct

instructors. The Institute was to be structured on the following three tenets:

1. Effective staff development programs involve a knowledge base of theory, research and wisdom of practice, modeling with identification and analysis by participants, protected practice of strategies, and demonstrated performance of strategies in the real world of schools with coaching (Joyce and Showers, 1980; McAllister & Neubert, 1995; Binko, Neubert & Madden, 1997).
2. Teacher trainers for state-mandated, secondary reading courses must, themselves, be skilled readers, knowledgeable consumers of seminal and contemporary theory, research and wisdom of practice, competent demonstrators of strategies, and experienced professionals with strong interpersonal skills.
3. There is not one reading strategy/approach that is best for all secondary students. Therefore, classroom teachers must be aware of, and skilled in, an array of reading-to-learn strategies, and they must be able to work metacognitively with secondary students to discern which strategies are best when and for whom.

The Institute was scheduled to meet on Tuesdays from 5 to 8 PM for the entire 1998-99 academic year, thus making participants ready and eligible to teach courses beginning the following summer (1999). Twenty-nine participants were

accepted into the Institute. Their tuition was paid by their school systems.

Semester One

The focus of the fall 1998 semester was the content of the reading courses—the knowledge base. The first evening was devoted to introductions and tapping our backgrounds to reach consensus on a definition of reading that we could all use when training teachers. We would resurrect this initial definition at the end of the fall 1998 semester to see if our literature study would affirm, or cause us to revise, this definition. We spent the remainder of the first semester immersed in the seminal and contemporary literature and research on three areas of reading: assessment, comprehension, and selection of content reading material. Each participant was assigned to one of these three expert areas; then each group subdivided the three broad areas into subtopics. For example, the group assigned to "selection of content reading material" subdivided the topic into the following six areas for individual or partner investigations: validity of readability formulas; cloze procedure; authentic/trade reading to bring "voice" to content learning; technology and multi-media to facilitate the reading process; use of a multi-text approach for differentiation; teachers modeling enthusiasm for reading.

Participants were to begin their research with the required course text, **How to Increase Reading Ability: A Guide to Developmental and Remedial Methods** by Harris and Sipay (1990), a

comprehensive review of research through 1990, then move to other summaries of research as well as individual research articles in recent journals such as **Reading Research Quarterly**. I suggested that the participants be guided by the following questions as they read the research:

1. What does the literature say about your topic/area? What conclusions/generalizations are made about your topic/area?
2. What should teachers know about your topic/area? What should teachers be able to do?
3. Should classroom teachers taking state-mandated reading courses read any of the literature you have found?

Participants spent several weeks of class time in their expert groups sharing research findings they had located during the week; then each expert group presented its research-supported conclusions to the entire class. Two sessions were allotted for each of these three expert groups to present their findings. During the last half hour of each session, participants reflected on what they had learned that evening and wrote associated learning outcomes which secondary content classroom teachers should therefore demonstrate in their classrooms. These learning outcomes would become the framework for the two reading courses that participants would eventually teach.

Semester Two

Armed with our knowledge base, we entered the spring 1999 semester focused on the **how** of teaching the reading courses. Each session, I taught a lesson from the first reading course, as I would on campus for our university. I intentionally modeled and debriefed my lesson focusing on the following guidelines for preparing and delivering effective staff development:

1. *Focus*: One strategy or two major ideas, with time for direct experience and/or guided practice, is better than a superficial coverage of several ideas.
2. *Support*: Succinctly share with your audience the validity of the strategy or approach you are endorsing and demonstrating. For example, the research on the effectiveness of graphic organizers can be summarized in one brief paragraph on a transparency. Be prepared for the enthusiasts and the skeptics who will want to know "why?" and "how well?" and "what if?"
3. *Visual Aids*: Clear visual aids improve retention. Do not just read what is on visuals; elaborate on each main point.
4. *Handouts*: Give participants essential handouts so they do not have to take copious notes. In this

way, participants in your session can listen more attentively and react more thoroughly. But only give the essential handouts. Do not distract participants with everything you found interesting about your topic. Include your name and professional association on any materials you create. Also give credit to the source for any materials you adapt.

5. *Direct Experience*: Whenever possible, have participants experience the strategy themselves. Have them role-play secondary students with you as the teacher. Direct experience helps the participant understand how the strategy works and "feels" to the students. It helps establish credibility of the strategy.

6. *Delivery*: Teaching adults is really a planned conversation. Talk to and with your audience in an enthusiastic and confident tone. Use standard English and the professional register. Avoid the trap of criticizing other professionals or groups.

7. *Protected/Guided Practice*: Give teachers opportunities to practice strategies or approaches in class in small groups (e.g., designing a DRTA with their own content

textbooks with others in the class who teach the same content).

8. *Practice in the Schools*: Design assignments that are performance assessments. Have the teachers in your courses try the demonstrated reading strategies in their own classrooms and bring videos of themselves and/or student work samples back to your class for debriefing/coaching.

The second part of each Tuesday session was devoted to one of the participants giving a presentation as she would plan and execute it when she teaches one of the reading courses. We used the same eight guidelines above for reacting to these presentations.

The last night of the course was "graduation" for the participants. Twenty-four of the original twenty-nine completed the 6-credit, year-long Institute. Each received a certificate identifying her as a graduate of the Reading Leadership Institute in a ceremony led by the dean of the college and chair of the secondary education department.

One Year Later

Now, a year after the Reading Leadership Institute began, all twenty-four participants have taught at least one state-mandated, secondary reading course for their school systems and most are on their second or third experience teaching

on their second or third experience teaching inservice reading courses. Eight of the Institute graduates are currently teaching reading courses for my college. Additionally, the graduates have developed a sound reputation for conducting excellent workshop presentations, so the Institute teachers are called upon frequently by individual schools to do sessions during professional development days. Five of the teachers presented their workshops at national meetings of learned societies this academic year, and ten teachers are applying for admission to doctoral programs so that they can eventually teach full-time at the university level. Just recently I was approached by a publisher with an invitation for us to write a text that could accompany the state-mandated, secondary reading courses. And we have a reunion planned for the spring of 2000—a time to share success stories and recurring problems associated with teaching preservice and inservice teachers.

The bottom line? A problem solved— at least temporarily! My department is encouraging me to conduct another secondary Institute and the elementary department is considering one. Colleges of education at other universities have expressed interest in replicating this model.

The advantages certainly warrant the continuation of this Reading Leadership Institute process. My university and the participating school systems now have a trained corps of adjunct reading faculty who bring a clear understanding of what to expect from students in these courses. They know their content and have practiced delivering lessons

and facilitating the learning of adult students. And, due to their daily experiences with students and teachers in the secondary schools where they teach, they bring credibility to the reading courses.

On a personal level, the Reading Leadership Institute graduates continue to experience a new sense of professionalism as they find themselves transformed into the role of teacher trainers. The following reflective statements from two of the Institute participants echo the enthusiasm of the entire group.

The Reading Leadership Institute renewed my professional energies. It challenged me to keep up with the other seasoned participants. I found springboards for much of the research and exploration I've done on my own since the Institute ended.

And another

I feel confident teaching the reading courses. I realize now how much my knowledge of the reading process was extended through the Institute, and I am secure knowing that I have a built-in network of contacts should I need answers or direction.

References

Binko, J.B., Neubert, G.A. & Madden, M. (1997). Writing and geography provide

Harris, A.J. & Sipay, E.R. (1990). *How to Increase Reading Ability: A Guide to Developmental & Remedial Methods.* Longman: White Plains, NY.

Joyce, B. & Showers, B. (1980). Improving inservice training: The messages of research. *Educational Leadership.* 37 (5), 379-385.

McAllister, E.A. & Neubert, G.A. (1995). *New Teachers Helping New Teachers: Preservice Peer Coaching.* EDINFO Press: Bloomington, IN.

Dr. Gloria A. Neubert may be contacted at Towson University in Towson, MD 21252

Editor's note: Gloria A. Neubert was co-founder of the Maryland Writing Project, a site of the National Writing Project. She has used much of her experience from that successful endeavor to design the Reading Leadership Institute.

The Reading Professor
2000, 22, (2) 38-54

IDENTIFYING EVALUATION NORMS OF READING FACULTY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Mary B. Campbell

In higher education, both within and across institutional lines, departments and individuals are being asked to examine their **evaluation** practices in order to confront what society perceives as grade inflation (Ekstrom & Villegas, 1994; Report on the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996). When society raises issues about grade inflation, in general they are describing their own attitudes toward what they perceive as leniency in evaluating and grading student work (Milton, Pollio, & Eison, 1986).

While there is a plethora of written discourse on the topics of evaluation and assessment ideology and practices, much of this avoids the issue of grading, especially determining letter grades for students in post-secondary institutions. Further, there have been no comprehensive studies about the beliefs and evaluation practices of reading faculty in academe. This knowledge is of fundamental significance in order to address national issues and to provide insight into future developments designed to improve instruction, preparation, and the quality of preparedness of our future literacy teachers.

This study emerged out of a personal examination of evaluation practices in my university reading methods courses and extended into a nationwide inquiry. The focus of this study was to determine if reading faculty hold commonly held beliefs about evaluation practices in academe.

Historical and Contemporary Determinations

What is meant by evaluation? This question is a notoriously complicated one, especially when considering the myriad of associated factors such as culture, academic freedom, institutional autonomy and institutional requirements.

Evaluation in a historical context has mostly meant the grading of student work, a process whereby student work and performance were generally reduced to a letter (A, B, C, D, F) or to a number (1-100) (Perrone, 1991). Numerous investigations of grading schemes indicate that the entire construct is complex, and not necessarily connected to any convincing theoretical or practice oriented formulation (Allison, Bryant, & Hourigan, 1997).

In Smallwood's landmark report, **An Historical Study of Examination and Grading Systems in Early American Universities** (1935) she points out that from the seventeenth century to the 1930's, the demands of evaluation and grading "became increasingly more insistent and more difficult to satisfy" (p. 115). Following this chronicled report, during the period from the 1930's

to the present, changes in the sociodemographics of higher education, as well as external social, political, and economic variations in the world, have resulted in a continued reexamination of ways to evaluate and grade student work.

Today in the contemporary culture of academe, Walvoord and Anderson (1998) define evaluation as the "**process** by which a teacher assesses student learning through classroom tests and assignments, the **context** in which teachers establish that process, and the **dialogue** that surrounds grades and defines their meaning to various audiences" (p. 1). Thus evaluation includes setting criteria and standards, assisting student learning over time, providing timely feedback for students, developing student motivation, tailoring instructional and assessment practices to the learning goals of the course, communicating with students about their progress in the course, and using the results to inform pedagogy (Walvoord and Anderson). In **The Literacy Dictionary: The Vocabulary of Reading and Writing** (1995), which is considered the primary educators' and researchers' resource for understanding literacy terms, evaluation is defined as, "judgement of performance as process or product of change" (Harris & Hodges, p. 76).

Although contemporary grading methods such as, pass/fail, contract grading, portfolio assessment or narrative grading, can be found in some American universities today (Allison et al, 1997; Wiggins, 1998), most of us still have to reduce all student learning to one letter grade

followed by its transfer to the Registrar at the end of each term. Now, sixty-five years after Smallwood's 1935 report, and at the beginning of a new millennium, the dissatisfaction with evaluation and grading practices still remains.

Related Studies

The unreliability of grading has been aptly demonstrated in the research literature (Diedrich, 1974; Lloyd-Jones, 1987; White, 1994). Starch and Elliot (1912) demonstrated the unreliability of grading when they asked teachers throughout the United States to grade the same essay paper. The teachers' scores, on the identical paper, ranged from the 30s to the 90s on a 100 point scale. Another example of the unreliability of grading was shown by Branthwaite, Trueman, and Berrisford (1981) when they concluded that the same grader may even assign a different grade on a different day to the exact same material. Further, we know that A work with one professor may not be A work with another professor. What does an A, B, C, D, mean anyway? It does not appear to mean any defined amount of knowledge or skill, and thus as a consequence, grade point averages often represent a meaningless averaging of unclear assumptions and unstated standards.

Ekstrom and Villegas (1994) conducted a study to determine how the grading practices at fourteen institutions changed between 1980 and 1990. They found that more than half the responding faculty reported efforts to raise

standards and they concluded, "There appears to be considerable pressure on institutions of higher education and their faculties to reduce what the public perceives as lax standards resulting in ever rising GPA'S" (p. 36).

Bleich (1997) believes that grades are not likely to disappear anytime in the foreseeable future and they are currently being revived to be the keepers of standards. Without established norms for the evaluation process there is little the individual professor can do when determining that final grade beyond "muddling through the process even though it means continued unfairness and well meaning dishonesty" (Wiggins, 1998, p. 288).

Renewal In Evaluation Practices

To initiate reform in evaluation and grading practices in higher education, it is fundamental to begin with what we believe. Among the reading faculty there are commonly held beliefs about content standards developed by the Professional Ethics and Standards Committee of the International Reading Association and published in the **Standards for Reading Professionals** (1998). These standards serve many purposes, one of which is to assist in the establishment and evaluation of teacher preparation programs, as well as to provide standards for the education of preservice teachers. There are also commonly held beliefs about assessment practices that are published in the **Standards for the Assessment of Reading and Writing** (1994). However, there are no normative

structures of beliefs among the reading faculty about evaluating and grading student work in higher education.

Given the high degree of autonomy that academics have in grading practices, an understanding of the normative structures of these practices is of utmost importance. Such an understanding is also relevant given the national attention that has focused on grade inflation and the improvement of teacher preparation programs (Holmes Group, 1995; Report on the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996). The evaluation of preservice literacy teachers is a critical component of teacher education and unless we, collectively as reading educators, can somehow examine and perhaps resolve the issues of grading with our colleagues and our students, even the most rigorous standards may lose their value if they are imbedded in soft grading and evaluation practices.

Methodology

In the academic profession, faculty members are professionals bound to each other not only at the institutional level as colleagues, but also to their disciplinary affiliates and to the national aggregation of the professoriate. The functionalist perspective about professions holds that individual professional behavior is greatly exercised through the community of the profession (Goode, 1957). The community of the profession often has goals that are coupled with regulations that specify

permissible procedures for realizing these goals (Merton, 1968). These regulations may be value-laden sentiments that are prescriptions, preferences, permissions, or proscriptions for conduct in pursuit of the goals. Such value-laden sentiments are defined to be regulatory norms or informal mechanisms of social control, and it is believed that compliance with these norms enhance the advancement of knowledge.

Two questions emerged to guide this pilot study: 1) Are there common assumptions and beliefs about grading practices that are shared by members of the reading professoriate in higher education? 2) If shared beliefs do exist, are they significant enough to be regarded as norms?

Sampling Design

The population of inference for this study was the faculty in teacher preparation programs who teach reading methods courses and hold full-time academic appointments at colleges and universities in the United States. To construct the faculty sample, the specific names of faculty were derived from the most recent membership list of the International Reading Association. The membership list includes over 3,000 members who are designated as college or university faculty, and from this group, a small, random, pilot sample of 50 names was drawn. The sample group participated in the study by responding to the questionnaire and by providing suggestions for refinement of the items.

The data collection instrument, a demographic questionnaire and a cover letter, were mailed to the faculty sample. A total of 19 individuals returned the survey forms. Thus a response rate of 38 percent was realized. Addressed return-envelopes were included to facilitate the return of the questionnaire. Anonymity of respondents, assured by not asking for names, hopefully encouraged honest answers. Although 19 survey instruments were received, the sample size was reduced to 17 by the application of four criteria for inclusion in the data analysis. These four criteria were: 1) the individual holds a full-time academic appointment, 2) the individual teaches reading methods courses, 3) the individual is tenured or holds a tenure-track appointment, and 4) the individual holds the rank of assistant professor or higher. States represented in the sample include Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, and Wisconsin.

Data Collection Instrument

The data collection instrument, **Reading Faculty Teaching Behaviors Questionnaire,** was designed and constructed for this research. The instrument was based upon the format of the **College Teaching Behaviors Inventory** (Braxton, Bayer, & Finkelstein, 1992). Items written by the researcher and selected items from the **College Teaching Behaviors Inventory** comprised the questionnaire. The instrument included 44 items about grading practices. The items were worded negatively so as to cast each item in the form of a

violation of preferred action. This approach is consistent with the general principle advanced by Durkheim (1934) that norms are best known or recognized by individuals when violated. The principle of ascertaining norms by assessing the opinions of individual faculty members was followed in this study.

Reading faculty were asked to indicate their opinion on each specific item as it might ideally apply to a faculty member teaching a reading methods course. The following response categories were provided: (1) appropriate behavior, (2) discretionary behavior, (3) mildly inappropriate behavior, (4) inappropriate behavior, and (5) very inappropriate behavior. Only the items for which the mean value was 4.0 or higher were determined to be norms.

Data Analysis

Sample descriptive means were used to delineate those items that merit the criterion for delineation as a norm. Only those items that had a mean value of 4.0 or higher on the scale were in the analysis. The means, standard deviations, minimums, maximums, highest frequency response, and percentages for the 14 (out of 44) items that have a mean value of 4.0 or higher are reported in Table 1.

To delineate those items that fell into the appropriate behavior category, descriptive means of a value below 2.0 qualified the items for inclusion into this category. These items are not defined as

Table 1

Norms Perceived to be of Highest Level of Impropriety in Grading Practices

Item	M	SD	MIN	MAX	HFR	P
Graded tests/papers are not promptly returned	4.29	.99	2	5	5	58.8
The instructor lowers standards to be popular with students	4.71	.59	3	5	5	76.5
The standards are set so high that most of the class receive) failing grades	4.76	.44	4	5	5	76.5
Individuals are offered extra work to change their final course grade after the term is completed	4.24	1.15	2	5	5	58.8
Explanations of grades on essay questions or papers is not given	4.59	.62	3	5	5	64.7
Written comments on tests and papers are not made	4.47	.87	2	5	5	64.7
The instructor does not provide useful feedback on exams/quizzes	4.59	.62	3	5	5	64.7
The final grade is based on a single course assignment or a single examination	4.69	.79	2	5	5	76.5
When scoring exams/papers, no written criteria are used in scoring	4.00	1.10	2	5	5	41.2
The instructor does not use the results of exams/quizzes to inform instruction	4.13	.72	3	5	4	50.0
The exam does not test course objectives	4.63	.50	4	5	5	58.0
Students do not know from the beginning of a course, how much the assessments will count toward their final grade	4.63	.50	4	5	5	58.8
The relevance of papers, exams, projects is not communicated to students	4.63	.50	4	5	5	58.8
The timeliness of feedback is not an important aspect of grading	4.00	1.11	2	5	5	35.5

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

norms but provide further information about practices that are defined as being appropriate.

Analytic Results

The following analytic results are presented with the recognition of the aforementioned sample size as a limitation. Out of 44 grading practices, 14 met the criterion of 4.0 or higher. By definition, these behaviors suggest normative structures within the reading profession. The norm perceived to be of the highest level of impropriety (as shown in Table 1) was, **the instructor who sets standards so high that most of the class receives failing grades** (mean = 4.76). The minimum reported score of 4 and the maximum reported score of 5 show a high degree of agreement among the respondents for this practice. The second highest practice of impropriety was, **lowering course standards to be popular with students** (mean = 4.71). The minimum and maximum scores reported for this practice were 3 and 5 respectively. The third practice of highest impropriety was, **basing the final course grade on a single course assignment or a single examination** (mean = 4.69) with a minimum score of 2 and a maximum score of 5, indicating wider spread viewpoints about this practice.

A sample of the items that did not meet the mean criterion of 4.0 or higher are as follows: **All students in the course receive an A grade** (mean

3.50), with a minimum score of 2 and a maximum score of 5. **Competency in written Standard English is not a part of the grading process** (mean = 3.53), with a minimum score of 2 and a maximum score of 5, indicating there is not significant support to delineate including the evaluation of written Standard English usage as a normative practice.

Table 2 lists the grading practices that had a mean below 2.0. Means calculated below 2.0 indicate appropriate grading behaviors for the reading professionals. The lowest mean was recorded for the item, **the instructor does not have a normal distribution of grades based upon the bell curve** (mean = 1.63) with a minimum score of 1 and a maximum score of 2. These analytic results indicate close agreement among the respondents for this grading practice.

Discussion

The data generated by this study strongly suggest there are commonly held beliefs and assumptions among reading professors about grading and evaluation practices in higher education. Fourteen of the stated practices met the criterion to be classified as normative structures. As norms are functional to the ideal of service, it is useful to determine our shared values, beliefs (norms/ideals) for evaluating and grading student learning. Consequently, further research will be conducted that seeks to identify specific norms for evaluating student progress.

Table 2

Behaviors Perceived to be Appropriate in Grading Practices

Item	M	SD	MIN	MAX	HFR	P
Student work that is not turned in on time is accepted and receives a lower grade	1.81	.40	1	2	2	76.5
All instructors of undergraduate reading courses nationwide do not use a universally wide system of grading (e.g. 96-100 = A; 86-95 = B; 70-85 = C, etc.)	1.94	1.06	1	5	2	41.2
The instructor does not put a letter grade (A, B, C, D, F) on all assessments	1.87	.52	1	3	2	64.7
The instructor does not have a normal distribution of grades based upon the bell curve	1.63	.50	1	2	2	58.8

While norms may enhance the advancement of knowledge, we must be ever mindful of academic pedagogical freedom. It is also worthy to note that academic freedom is never quite absolute anywhere. It is always guided by norms, spoken or unspoken, and pressures from various constituencies. Furthermore calls for academic freedom are not credible if they do not embrace the call for renewal as well. To clearly define and establish written normative structures, we must be ever mindful not to limit learning by narrowing curriculum, nor inhibit creative teaching and learning that is grounded in effective pedagogy and sound research.

The establishment of standards and norms does not mean abandoning desirable differences and idiosyncrasies in teaching, learning, and assessing.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The inherent subjectivity of human judgement is not a flaw (Wiggins, 1998). Common sense and the highest levels of Bloom's taxonomy reveal that the most intellectually important tasks involve human judgement.

Inquiry into additional fundamental questions is recommended. Are evaluation and grading practices inculcated through the graduate school preparation for the reading professional? Do faculty practices vary across various types of colleges and universities (i.e. research institutions, teaching institutions, etc.). Should grades reflect effort? Improvement? Achievement?

Fullan, Galluzzo, Morris, and Watson (1998) concluded their report about teacher education reform movements over the past decade in the United States by stating there has never been a more powerful convergence of political and programmatic agreement, calling for immediate and sustained action in teacher education. Moreover, reform is currently underway and it is not likely that it will be unparalleled by any other teacher education reform movement in the history of the teaching profession.

For centuries evaluation practices have been dubious at best. Lack of clarity and continual examination of grading practices, seem destined for a secure place in higher education reform for the foreseeable future. Since evaluation and grading are closely tied to student learning, further investigations into identifying and understanding normative structures of these practices are vital to

the improvement of teacher education in the new millennium.

References

Allison, L., Bryant, L., & Hourigan, M. (1997). *Grading in the post-process classroom: From theory to practice*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers.

Bleich, D. (1997). What can be done about grading? In L. Allison, L. Bryant, & M. Hourigan (Eds.), *Grading in the post process classroom: From theory to practice*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers.

Branthwaite, A., Trueman, M., & Berrisford, T. (1981). Unreliability of marking: Further evidence and a possible explanation. *Educational Review, 33*, (1), 41-46.

Braxton, J., Bayer, A., & Finkelstein, M. (1992). Teaching performance norms in academia. *Research in Higher Education, 33*, 533-569.

Diedrich, P. (1974). *Measuring growth in English*. Urbana, IL: NCTE.

Durkheim, E. (1934). *The elementary forms of religious life*. London: Allen and Unwin (original work published in 1912).

Ekstrom, R., & Villegas, A. (1994). *College grades: An exploratory study of policies and practices*. (Educational Testing Service, Report No. ETS-RR-94-23). Princeton.

Fullan, M., Galluzzo, G., Morris, P., & Watson, N. (1998). *The rise and stall of teacher*

education reform. Washington, DC: AACTE Publications.

Goode, W. (1957). Community within a community. *American Sociological Review, 22*, 194-200.

Harris, T., & Hodges, R. (Eds.) (1995). *The literacy dictionary: The vocabulary of reading and writing*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Holmes Group (1995). *Tomorrow's teachers: A report of the Holmes Group*. East Lansing, MI. Author.

Lloyd-Jones, R. (1987). Tests of writing ability. In G. Tate (Ed.), *Teaching composition: Twelve bibliographic essays. (pp. 155-176)*. Fort Worth, TX: Christian University Press.

Merton, R. (1968). *Social theory and social structure*. New York: The Free Press.

Milton, O., Pollio, H., & Eison, J. (1986). *Making sense of college grades: Why the grading system does not work and what can be done about it*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Perrone, V. (1991). *A letter to teachers*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Report from the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996). *What matters most: Teaching for America's future. (Research Report No. 395931)*. New York.

Smallwood, M. (1935). *An historical study of examinations and grading systems in early American universities: A critical study of the original records of Harvard, William and Mary, Yale, Mount Holyoke, and Michigan*

from their founding to 1900. London: Oxford University Press.

Standards for the assessment of reading and writing (1994). Newark, DE: International Reading Association; Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Standards for reading professionals (1998). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Starch, D., & Elliot, E. (1912). Reliability of the grading of high-school work in English. *The School Review XX* (January-December), 442-57.

Walvoord, B., & Anderson, V. (1998) *Effective grading: A tool for learning and assessment*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

White, E. (1994). *Teaching and assessing writing: Recent advances in understandings, evaluating, and improving student performance*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Wiggins, G. (1998). *Educative assessment: Designing assessments to inform and improve student performance*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Dr. Mary B. Campbell may be reached at Saint Xavier University of Chicago where she teaches courses in literacy.

The Reading Professor
2000, 22, (2) 55-79

VOICES FROM THE FIELD: PRESERVICE TEACHERS' CASES AS SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR FIELD-BASED TEACHER PREPARATION

Janet C. Richards and Joan P. Gipe

Cases employed in teacher education are focused, engaging narratives varying in length from one to 30 pages. Usually written in the first person, they describe "a wide variety of [authentic] situations, decisions, dilemmas, and difficulties that routinely confront teachers and teacher educators" (Sykes, 1992, p. ix)

"Case writing may well bring special benefits to those who write them, prompting them to reflect upon their practices and to become more analytic about their work" (L. Shulman, 1992, p. 9)

Being convinced of the benefits of case methods for education majors, we now require case writing as part of course requirements. Preservice teachers in our field-based literacy methods courses write two case narratives per semester about their concerns and problems teaching elementary students in nonmainstream schools. Our observations show that raising questions and seeking solutions to context-specific teaching dilemmas help our preservice teachers come to

recognize that there is no one "right answer" in teaching. Equally important, authoring cases helps to define our preservice teachers, early in their professional careers, as problem-solvers and reflective practitioners who willingly accept responsibility for their students' academic achievements (Richards & Gipe, 2000).

As university supervisors, our own understandings of case methods have broadened considerably since we added case writing to our course agendas three years ago. We have become more proficient in fostering our preservice teachers' habits of critical reflection, helping them to reason and think through educational problems. We also have refined the ways in which we nurture our preservice teachers' case writing initiatives. For example, recently we devised explicit directions to guide their writing (see Appendix for an example of these directions). In addition, we now urge our preservice teachers to seek and include relevant resources in their narratives, such as outside readings or conversations with peers and professionals, that may help them ponder and resolve their teaching concerns. Concurrently, we have become particularly drawn to the content of our preservice teachers' cases as rich sources of information. Specifically, we noted that the themes in our preservice teachers' narratives have diversified considerably since we first added case writing to our program requirements. We equate preservice teachers' abilities to distinguish and frame diverse classroom dilemmas with their maturing sensitivity and acuity as professionals

Therefore, we wanted to uncover some explanations for their expanded professional perspectives.

Since we supervise literacy field programs in two urban, elementary schools in neighboring states we also were curious to see if the content of the cases differed according to our preservice teachers' specific teaching milieus (e.g., Davis School has considerable student management problems; West School has many students who are language variation speakers). Extensive studies show that "contexts clearly matter for teachers' work and how that work is experienced" (Hargreaves, 1996, p. 15). In addition, we wondered if examining and categorizing the cases according to thematic topics would pinpoint specific gaps in our instructional activities that might require our attention. Like most teacher educators, we want to accept responsibility for our practices and remediate rough spots in our pedagogy (Anderson, DeMeulle & Johnston, 1996; Ryan & Cooper, 1998).

In order to establish some firm answers to our speculations, we decided to conduct a systematic qualitative research project documenting the themes in our preservice teachers' narratives over the past three years. Ultimately, we hoped to improve our own teaching practices by uncovering the day-to-day concerns, dilemmas, needs, and complex situations of preservice teachers working with elementary students in nonmainstream schools.

Conceptual Framework for Our Inquiry

Three literatures informed our inquiry: 1) tenets of social constructivism which suggest that

language reveals an individual's knowledge, perceptions, and beliefs (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984); 2) ideas from discourse analysis that describe written texts as true reflections of human experiences (Gee, Michaels, & O'Connor, 1992); and 3) premises from social interactionism which suggest that as mature human beings encounter problems, they move to resolve those problems through thoughtful reflection and action (Woods, 1992). In addition, we were mindful of traditions from hermeneutic interpretations which "indicate that the same text can be read [and interpreted] in a number of different ways" (Tappan & Brown, 1992, p. 186).

Research Methodology

Questions Guiding Our Research

In our inquiry we sought to answer the following questions:

1) What common themes are visible in our preservice teachers' cases?
2) In what ways has the thematic content of our preservice teachers' narratives diversified since we first added case writing to our course agendas?
3) What contributing factors might influence expansions in our preservice teachers' case writing perspectives?
4) Are possible theme variations in our preservice teachers' cases related to the contextual conditions of the urban schools in which they work?

5) Do the contents of our preservice teachers' narratives illuminate distinct instructional shortcomings or program issues that we, as supervisors, need to correct?

Analyzing the Cases

Working as a research team, we examined and categorized 688 teaching cases written by our 344 preservice teachers over the past three years (110 preservice teachers in Year One, 118 preservice teachers in Year Two, 116 preservice teachers in Year Three). Each preservice teacher wrote two cases (one case was written eight weeks into the semester and the other as part of final exam requirements). First, we collated the cases according to the two different teaching contexts in which our preservice teachers work (354 cases were written by 177 preservice teachers who worked in Davis School and 334 cases were written by 167 preservice teachers who worked in West School. Then, we placed the two groups of cases in chronological order, beginning with the first year we implemented case writing with our preservice teachers.

In subsequent meetings, using analytic induction (Bogdan & Biklin, 1987), we read and reread the narratives, looking for emerging categories and patterns that would "facilitate a coherent synthesis of the data" (Gay, 1996, p. 227). We made notes and underlined what we considered to be salient dimensions of the texts as a way of revealing the predominant theme or central issue contained in each teaching case (e.g., misbehavior,

disrespect, concern for students' use of invented spelling, dilemmas about students' use of oral and written language variations). Next, we coded and tabulated each narrative according to the prevailing theme (e.g., "Meeting students' diverse literacy learning needs" or "Worries about a student's well-being"). We settled any differences in our interpretations through collegial discussions until we reached agreement.

Themes in Our Preservice Teachers' Cases: Year One

Analysis of the cases revealed that across the two teaching contexts, during the first year of the project, all of our 110 preservice teachers wrote about four main concerns in both of their teaching narratives (i.e., 220 cases): 1) problems managing individual students or groups of students; 2) worries about a student's well-being; 3) concerns about supporting the literacy learning needs of students who are language variation speakers and; 4) dilemmas guiding students' spelling development (see Table 1 for the number of cases in each of these categories for each school context). The following case excerpts illustrate three of these themes.

Table I
Year One - 110 Preservice Teachers - 220 Cases

Predominant Case Themes and Number of Cases
in Each Category for Each School Context

Davis School - 57 Preservice Teachers

Problems managing students	73 cases
Worries about a student's well-being	10 cases
Dilemmas guiding students' spelling development	12 cases
Concerns about teaching language variation speakers	19 cases

West School - 53 Preservice Teachers

Problems managing students	14 cases
Worries about a student's well-being	15 cases
Dilemmas guiding students' spelling development	16 cases
Concerns about teaching language variation speakers	61 cases

Problems Managing Individual Students or Groups of Students

Victoria: The Sweet Little Devil

One child in particular gives me great difficulties. Victoria is a pretty and very active six-year-old girl. She is constantly out of her desk or in another's work space. On one occasion, Victoria ran up in front of the class and started dancing! Of course, I immediately told her to sit at her desk.

Victoria's misbehavior goes beyond misconduct and disrespect. The other day, I was helping a student with his journal and she looked at

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

his entry about football and said, "Oh, you like to play football? You can't play football!"

Another time, Victoria looked at a boy and said, "Oh, he looks soooo cute! He looks like a girl."

Do I keep calling attention to Victoria's misbehavior and forfeit class time? Do I relax and overlook her behavior, hoping it will subside if I don't give her attention? I am lost. Please help me.

Worries about a Student's Well-Being

A Secret

In one of my journal entries to James I wrote how I used to sing in music competitions and I told him how nervous these competitions made me. This was his reply.

"I get nervous too ... about a gun, knife, and to die and to get hit by a car or to kill someone. My grandmother and granddad had a fight and I went over there and almost stabbed him in the head. But, I missed. Just between us please promise that you will keep this between us to [sic]."

Well, as you can imagine, I was quite alarmed when I read this. Hence, the dilemma. What does one do when a child asks you to keep a promise not to say anything to anyone but, you feel that it may be something that the classroom teacher may need to know?

Is Invented Spelling For Everyone?

Margaret is a very sweet first grader. She always enjoys journal time. But, I always have to read my entry to her because she can't read. Then, she tells me what she wants to write to me and I write it for her. She does try to look at my entry and copy the date and my name. The problem is that when she does attempt to write back to me she just writes strings of letters. It isn't even invented spelling. It's just a random scrawl of letters.

One day in my entry to Margaret, I asked her, "What are your favorite things to do?"

She said, "My favorite thing is to work."

I replied, "That's great! Write that for me."

This is what she wrote, "Teknvolyahunftsg to go isimotkir. etnki."

I asked her to read her sentence to me. But, she couldn't and I couldn't read it either. That was a big mistake on my part. When she saw that I couldn't read her entry to me she felt terrible. Now she won't write at all.

Theme Expansions: Year Two

Our analysis of the narratives showed that during the second year of the project, the themes in our preservice teachers' cases gradually expanded. All of our 118 preservice teachers in Davis and in West Schools wrote about one of the following seven issues in both of their cases: 1) managing

individual students or groups of students; 2) working with young learners; 3) teaching reading; 4) guiding students' spelling development; 5) working with special needs students; 6) meeting students' diverse literacy needs and; 7) working with students who are language variation speakers (see Table 2 for the number of cases in each of these categories for each school context). The following case excerpts depict two of these diverse themes.

Table 2
Year Two - 118 Preservice Teachers - 236 Cases

Predominant Case Themes and Number of Cases in Each Category for Each School Context

Davis School - 62 Preservice Teachers

Problems managing students	59 cases
Quandaries about working with young learners	10 cases
Problems teaching reading	8 cases
Dilemmas about guiding students' spelling development	18 cases
Concerns about working with special needs students	17 cases
Problems meeting students diverse literacy needs	7 cases
Concerns about teaching language variation speakers	5 cases

West School - 56 Preservice Teachers

Problems managing students	10 cases
Quandaries about working with young learners	9 cases
Problems teaching reading	8 cases
Dilemmas about guiding students' spelling development	15 cases
Concerns about working with special needs students	16 cases
Problems meeting students diverse literacy needs	5 cases
Concerns about teaching language variation speakers	49 cases

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

I Have Teaching Flaws

The other day I audio taped myself while I was teaching a reading lesson. What a shock I had when I listened to the tape! First, I assumed that my students had the same background knowledge that I have. I did not remember that I am working with fourth graders ... not adults. For example, I read a sentence from a story that said, "Fondo had become such a familiar face at the lake that even Mae Marie had a great fondness for him."

I said, "Isn't it interesting how the author chose to name the character, Fondo, and Mae Marie had a fondness for him?"

I was hoping for some student comments. But, no one in the group said anything. After awhile, I realized that my students did not know what the word, 'fondness' meant. So, we stopped and used the word in meaningful sentences and then we entered the word in our personal dictionaries.

Another flaw I discovered is that I don't give my students enough time to respond to questions I ask pertaining to the story ... I tend to rush. I was horrified when I heard myself on the cassette tell a student, "Just a second on your response. We need to finish the story. But, thanks for raising your hand."

In these lessons I was more concerned about covering reading material than in promoting quality learning time for students. I sure learned about my flaws and I intend to correct them.

Dilemmas working with students who are language variation speakers

Eiza Uses "Her" Language

There is one girl in my group who speaks with a strong dialect. Eiza pronounces many words differently from other students. Her dialect directly impacts how she spells words. For example, she says, "sofer" for the word, "sofa." Understandably, she spells the word,'sofa,' 's-o-f-e-r.' She also pronounces the word, 'this', 'dis'. Of course, she spells the word, 'this', 'd-i-s'.

I try to emphasize to her that there is a time and place for speaking dialect. But, Eiza is only nine years old and she only knows one way of speaking ... the language she learned at home. I am getting nowhere trying to help her. I do read quality children's literature aloud to my group so that they will hear standard English. I also serve as a good role model. I speak standard English and write in standard English on the board and in our Language Experience Stories. But, I haven't made an impression with Eiza. She continues to use her "own" language. According to Norton (1997), I need to provide more interventions for promoting Eiza's recognition and use of standard English, such as small and large group discussions, drama, role-playing, improvisations, Show and Tell, sentence expansion activities, telephone conversations, and puppet shows.

Theme Expansions: Year Three

Analysis of the cases showed that during the third year of the project, the themes in our preservice teachers' cases continued to expand, as we suspected. All of the 116 preservice teachers wrote about one of the following 12 issues in both of their cases: 1) managing individual students or groups of students; 2) working with young learners; 3) teaching reading; 4) guiding students' spelling development; 5) teaching and promoting writing; 6) working with students with special needs; 7) integrating the visual and performing arts with literacy activities; 8) meeting students' diverse literacy learning needs; 9) confronting social and educational issues impacting students' literacy development; 10) enhancing students' speaking and listening abilities; 11) motivating students to enjoy learning and 12) working with students who are language variation speakers (see Table 3 for the number of cases in each of these categories for each school context). The following case excerpts illustrate two of these theme expansions.

Concerns with Teaching and Promoting Writing

The Challenges of Creating a Book

The process of making creative books with first graders is harder than I anticipated. First, I made sure that I explained the basic features of all good stories ... characters, settings, problems, and

Table 3
Year Three - 116 Preservice Teachers - 232 Cases

Predominant Case Themes and Number of Cases in Each Category for Each School Context

Davis School - 58 Preservice Teachers

Problems managing students	48 cases
Quandaries about working with young learners	5 cases
Problems teaching reading	5 cases
Dilemmas about guiding students' spelling development	16 cases
Problems about teaching and promoting writing	12 cases
Concerns about working with special needs students	8 cases
Dilemmas about integrating the arts with literacy activities	5 cases
Confronting social and educational issues	4 case
Concerns about students' speaking and listening abilities	4 cases
Quandaries about motivating students to learn	5 cases
Problems meeting students diverse literacy needs	2 cases
Concerns about teaching language variation speakers	2 cases

West School - 58 Preservice Teachers

Problems managing students	2 cases
Quandaries about working with young learners	5 cases
Problems teaching reading	3 cases
Dilemmas about guiding students' spelling development	15 cases
Problems about teaching and promoting writing	3 cases
Concerns about working with special needs students	5 cases
Dilemmas about integrating the arts with literacy activities	4 cases
Confronting social and educational issues	3 cases
Concerns about students' speaking and listening abilities	4 cases
Quandaries about motivating students to learn	9 cases
Problems meeting students diverse literacy needs	8 cases
Concerns about teaching language variation speakers	55 cases

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

solutions. In fact, I spent two days going over these features. Then, we started the creative books.

Derek was one of the children who had the most problems. He forgot all of the story features except characters. Then, he insisted that he would be the only character in his story. We were getting nowhere.

I finally had to make four big circles on a chart. I wrote one story feature in each of the circles. Then, I modeled, modeled, modeled how to create a story by using the four story features. After that, I drew lines connecting the story characters with the settings, the settings with the problems, and the problems with the solutions, etc. Eventually, after talking with my fellow preservice teachers, I realized that I should have done all of this modeling at the beginning. I also should have made my own creative book and shared it with my group before I asked them to create their own books.

Quandaries Integrating the Arts with Literacy Activities

What Went Wrong with This Drama Production?

I thought that our second grade drama production would be perfect. We decided to base our drama on a monkey book that the students loved. I gave them their parts and we practiced hard. We even presented our production to another group to help us get prepared to speak in front of others in a formal situation.

What a shock to me when things didn't go well when we performed on the stage. First, we had to wait 30 minutes for the audience to arrive. That made my students really anxious and nervous. Then, for some unknown reason, my students didn't remember their parts and they spoke so softly that the audience could barely hear them.

As I reflected on this drama dilemma I decided that I needed to know WHY things didn't go as planned. I found out from our language arts text that teachers should give students opportunities to act out various characters in a drama production and then encourage students to choose what parts they want to play. Without realizing it, I had made this activity "teacher-driven" instead of "student-centered." Dominique, one of my students showed this when she wrote in her journal, "I liked our drama about the monkey. But, I wanted to be an animal but it's ok. narrator was easy."

Discussion

School Context

Not surprisingly, our exploration of the cases showed that school context played a major part in influencing what experiences our preservice teachers discerned and considered especially troublesome. During the three years of the project, the 177 preservice teachers who worked in Davis School, noted for chronic student management problems, authored 180 teaching cases dealing with student supervision concerns (i.e., 51% of 354 cases). Similarly, the 167 preservice teachers who

taught where the majority of students are language variation speakers wrote 165 teaching cases centered on the literacy learning needs of students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds (i.e., 49% of 334 cases).

Our Own Ongoing Development as Literacy Teacher Educators

In order to illuminate what contributing factors might have influenced the considerable expansions in our preservice teachers' case writing perspectives, we critically reflected on our own ongoing development and proficiencies as literacy teacher educators. We concluded that over the past three years we have become more knowledgeable about case-based methodology. We also acquired greater expertise in fostering our preservice teachers' habits of critical reflection. In addition, we perfected and refined the ways in which we nurture our preservice teachers' case writing initiatives. For example, during the first year of the project we accepted teaching cases in which our preservice teachers merely asked us to find solutions to the dilemmas they presented (e.g., "So, Dr. R., what do you think I should do?"). During the second year of the project, we recognized that we needed to develop and fine tune our preservice teachers' abilities to discern, reflect upon, and document the multitude of quandaries associated with meeting the literacy learning needs of elementary students. Therefore, we devised a listing of questions designed to activate our preservice teachers' habits of discernment and reflective thinking (e.g., "What

was the purpose of your lesson?; "How did each student in your group react to your lesson?"; "What went particularly well or poorly?"). Again, reflecting our own professional growth, during the third year of the project we required our preservice teachers to seek and describe possible remedies to their teaching concerns (e.g., "I decided to research this problem and discovered in my Ed Psych book that it is perfectly normal for young children to be egocentric. No wonder Hasan didn't want a student partner to correct his paper."). We also provided specific guidelines to direct our preservice teachers' case writing efforts (see Appendix). In addition, we scheduled class time for our preservice teachers to engage in peer reviews of one another's cases. Further, we encouraged our preservice teachers to consider case writing as a process, proceeding through several rough drafts until they polished their final manuscript. Because of our own professional growth, we were able to help our preservice teachers become more capable and skillful at recognizing and documenting a variety of literacy teaching events as problematic and we became more accomplished supporting our preservice teachers as case authors and co-constructors of their own learning (see Harrington & Hodson, 1993).

Gaps in Instruction and Program Contextual Issues

Reviewing the themes in our preservice teachers' cases also highlighted some gaps in instruction and program contextual issues that need to be acknowledged and addressed. We discovered

that over the past three years, three persistent quandaries remained important to our preservice teachers: 1) concerns managing individual students or groups of students: 2) difficulties supporting the literacy learning of students who are language variation speakers and; 3) dilemmas guiding students' spelling development.

Implications for Teacher Education

The findings of our inquiry point to the efficacy of case writing for preservice teachers. Focusing on educational quandaries and pondering possible solutions to problems has the potential to enhance preservice teachers' professional growth (L. Shulman, 1992). Further, the themes in preservice teachers' cases can serve as windows into their teaching experiences and provide rich sources of information concerning the contextual conditions of the schools in which preservice teachers work. For example, we found that recurring discipline problems in one of our participating elementary schools contributed to our preservice teachers' substantial concerns with student management considerations. In the same way, preservice teachers who worked with large numbers of culturally and linguistically diverse students were considerably preoccupied with supporting the literacy learning needs of students whose first language differs from standard English. A fundamental factor affecting what preservice teachers learn and regard crucial about teaching may be the school context in which

their teaching occurs (Richards, Gipe, & Moore, 1995; Richards & Gipe, 2000).

In addition, careful attention to the case issues preservice teachers discern and consider important can offer insights to teacher educators about their own competence in guiding preservice teachers' professional development. As we became more knowledgeable about case methods, we developed greater understandings of the approaches and conditions necessary for nurturing our preservice teachers' case writing initiatives. It appears that the evolution of our perspectives enhanced our preservice teachers' abilities to identify and write about diverse literacy instructional concerns.

Finally, the content of preservice teachers' narratives can pinpoint gaps in course instruction or issues pertinent to teacher education field programs that need to be remedied. Because we now recognize our preservice teachers' ongoing dilemmas promoting their students' spelling development, their continuing frustrations with student management considerations, and their difficulties supporting the literacy learning needs of students who are language variation speakers, it is crucial that we increase our own understandings about these three encompassing concerns. Then, we can supply relevant readings and offer effective demonstration lessons, lectures, and seminar discussions that support our preservice teachers' specific and immediate professional and contextual needs.

References

Anderson, R., DeMeulle, L., & Johnston, J. (1997, Winter/Spring). Plugging in: On-line collegial dialogue for self-study. *Teaching Education, 8* (2), 129-757.

Bogdan, R., & Biklin, S. (1987*). Qualitative research for education (2nd ed.).* Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Gay, L. (1996). *Educational research: Competencies for analysis and application (5th ed.).* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Gee, J., Michaels, S., & O'Connor, C. (1992). Discourse analysis. In M. LeCompte, W. Millroy, and J. Preissle (Eds.). *The handbook of qualitative research in education* (pp 227-291). New York: Academic Press.

Goetz, J., & LeCompte, M. (1984). *Ethnography and qualitative design in educational research.* Orlando, FL: Academic Press.

Harrington, H., & Hodson, L. (1993, April). *Cases and teacher development.* Paper presented at the Annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Atlanta, GA.

Hargreaves, A. (1996, January-February). Revisiting voice. *Educational Researcher, 25*(1), 12-19.

Norton, D. (1997). *The effective teaching of language arts (5th ed.).* Columbus, OH: Merrill.

Richards, J., Gipe, J., & Moore, R. (1995, Spring). Lessons in the field: Context and the

professional development of university participants in an urban school placement. Research in the Schools, 41-54.

Richards, J., & Gipe, J. (2000). *Elementary literacy instruction: Cases and commentaries from the field.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Ryan, K., & Cooper, J. (1998). *Those who can, teach (8th ed.).* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Shulman L. (1992) Toward a pedagogy of cases. In J. Shulman (Ed.).*Case methods in teacher education* (pp. 1-30). New York: Teachers College Press.

Sykes, G. (1992). Foreword. In J. Shulman (Ed.). *Case methods in teacher education* (pp. vii-ix). New York: Teachers College Press.

Tappan, M., & Brown, L. (1992). Stories told and lessons learned: Toward a narrative approach to moral development and moral education. In C. Witherell and N. Noddings (Eds.). *Stories lives tell; Narrative and dialogue in education (pp. 171-192).* New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.

Woods, P. (1992). Symbolic interactionism: Theory and method. In M. LeCompte, W. Millroy, and J. Preissle (Eds.). *The handbook of qualitative research in education* (pp 337-404). New York: Academic Press.

Dr. Janet C. Richards teaches at the University of Southern Mississippi, Long Beach.

Dr. Joan P. Gipe teaches at California State University, Sacramento.

215

Appendix

Guidelines for Writing Teaching Cases

"There is not yet a consensus among educators as to what [exactly] constitutes a good case" (Merseth, 1991, p. 7). However, teaching cases usually are written in the first person. Cases may tell one main story, "but embedded within that story are other problems that can be discussed" (J. Shulman, 1993, p. 2). Like all good stories, cases contain characters that seem real, contain dialogue and rich detail, present a problem or a series of related problems that unfold over time, and are "contextualized in time and place" (L. Shulman, 1992, p. 21).

In order to write a good case, the first step is to identify and consciously reflect about a worrisome classroom situation. Then, after some preliminary planning, begin writing the first draft of your case. Write in the first person. Identify who you are, the context for the case, and the quandary that affects your teaching and your students' learning. Include real-life dialogue and exclude extraneous details. Your case may be as long as you wish, but should be a minimum of two pages.

The following questions may help you revise the first draft of your case:

1) Is it easy to identify the teaching dilemma in your case?

2) What might make your case better? For example, is there extraneous information? Have

you included authentic dialogue? Have you titled your case?

3) Have you tried to brainstorm and come up with some alternatives to the dilemmas presented in your case?

4) Have you tried to research the issue presented in your case?

The Reading Professor
2000, 22, (2) 80-88

CONTENT AREA READING: Why Do I Have to Take This Class?

Patricia Luse Smith

They're easy to spot. They usually sit together in one of the back corners of the room. They feign indifference, often talking among themselves, occasionally glancing toward me at the front of the room as if daring me to challenge their apathetic attitudes. They have about them an air of superiority, as if they think they are better than the other students in the room.

Their haughtiness sends the message, "I won't teach reading or have anything to do with it. I am a PE teacher, my students will be the athletes, we won't be sitting around reading books."

Or, perhaps this is the message that is beamed across the classroom expanse to me, "My subject is science (math, business, technology). My students will already know how to read by the time they get to me. They will be able to read the textbook because my subject is so challenging and students who can't read won't be taking my class."

The first couple of times I taught Content Area Reading at the university, I ignored the indifference and challenging "chips-on-the-shoulders" of the PE majors, the secondary science and math majors, and tried to focus on the rest of the students who were interested and eager to learn

what I had to offer. The indifferent students always passed the course, but their hearts and souls weren't into the content, they didn't grab the ideas and eagerly try to apply them to their subject areas. Instead, they reluctantly obliged me by dutifully completing assignments, attending most of the class sessions, mostly on time, and even appearing interested part of the time.

Although I rationalized to myself that the problem was theirs, that I did my part by offering the curriculum and it was their responsibility to participate and learn, I knew that the ultimate responsibility was with me. I had to do something to convince this segment of students that content area reading would be an important component in their future teaching careers.

Concerned about not reaching this percentage of students, I talked with a colleague about my dilemma. Our discussion revealed that she, too, experienced this in her Content Area Reading classes and she willingly shared her solution to the problem. I was eager to try her method and find out if it would work for me as successfully as it had for her.

The following quarter on the second day of class I put the plan into action. I walked into class and announced that I had an article I wanted the students to read and after they had read it silently, there would be a discussion and a short quiz. I then proceeded to hand out an obscure, highly technical, 5 page research article about reading miscues.

After about 7 minutes, I said, "Well, it looks like just about everyone is finished so let's discuss

the article." I then spent less than 2 minutes recounting the main ides of the article after which I asked if anyone had questions. No one did. I collected the research article and gave out the 5 question quiz.

After allowing the students to work on the quiz for 3 to 4 minutes, I told them to turn their papers over. There were audible groans at this point, it appeared that a mutiny was on the near horizon. I told the students I really wanted them to respond to only 4 questions and I wanted them to discuss question 4 with their peers sitting near them. I put these 4 questions on the overhead projector:

1. What emotions did you experience when I announced there would be a quiz?

2. How did you feel while you were reading the article?

3. Was the discussion helpful?

4. List suggestions to make this a better educational experience.

Responses to question 1 were not surprising to anyone in the class as we discussed the whole experience. Students expressed they felt pressured, scared, insecure, stupid, and "angry about being hit right off with a quiz." One student wrote, "I found myself worrying about the quiz, to the point where I couldn't really even concentrate on the article. I was trying to memorize every detail."

Other students described similar emotional reactions:

"When the word quiz was stated, I immediately started stressing out and becoming quite anxious and nervous."

"I felt sick to my stomach, scared of failing."

"What? Are you kidding? I've never had you before. What kind of professor are you?"

When we discussed question 2, the feelings that arose while reading the article, students' comments ranged from "I can't do this!" to "Whatever. I thought it was a joke because it was so hard to read. I just gave up after the first page."

Difficulty with reading the article also triggered these comments from students:

"While reading I was trying to memorize as much as possible but feeling very confused with the text--and I was wondering if everyone was as confused as I was. Still not happy about the quiz."

"I felt lost. I thought it was poorly written. I didn't understand any of it."

"I thought that if this is serious, then I'm in deep trouble."

"I am a slow reader, and therefore read fast, so I would not miss anything, since I did not know how long I had to read it. It sounded like gibberish."

"Reading the article was difficult. It was poorly written and I was not getting anything from the paper. I was angry about that because I knew that I would not be able to do well on the quiz."

Students were not shy about expressing their feelings when asked to comment on question 3, the discussion portion of the lesson. Many of the students were angry, others were incredulous that I would refer to my recitation as a discussion, and a few expressed amusement. The amusement

resulted from frustration and giving up, as these comments would suggest:

"Discussion? Maybe if you are a dictator! I had a **lot** of teachers in high school that would've thought your presentation was great though."

"I need to switch teachers or withdraw from this class."

"Discussion--it wasn't a discussion, you just rattled stuff off."

"I was thinking: Does everyone feel like I do, or do they get it? Not everyone in this room could possibly understand this article. I was also thinking--as you were so involved with discussing to us--I really didn't care. Let's just get this lesson done and move on."

Question 4 was the most in-depth question and it generated a lively, heated discussion, as well as these pointed, heart-felt suggestions to improve the lesson:

"Teach!! From the beginning break down the article, go over why and what was happening. Don't announce the quiz--(anxiety!). Smile occasionally! Evaluate what students know."

"Don't shock us. Let us read, let us talk with friends, let us ask more questions, test later."

"Give us something that we can understand. The discussion was awful, I thought you could go in depth more explaining how to do all the calculations and help us out with the vocabulary."

"Burn the article, get a new one--unless confusion and incomprehension are your goals."

"Give us more time to read the confusing, too-informative article! Don't give us all ulcers on the second day of the quarter!"

The class discussion about improving the ineffective lesson also included making a list of teaching strategies that could have been used in the presentation of the material. The focus of the class for the remainder of the quarter stemmed from this "terrible lesson" experience. We worked on expanding and developing effective strategies that were used as a basis for helping my students design lesson plans. The lesson plans followed a format of actively involving their future students in pre-reading, assisted-reading, and reflective-reading strategies designed to increase students' interest in, involvement with, and comprehension of content subjects.

To measure the success of my plan to convince students that "every teacher is a reading teacher" I used an exit survey during the last week of the quarter. Almost unanimously, students remarked that the "terrible" lesson presented the second day of class would be ineffective if they were to use a similar format with their students. Students' poignant comments reflected their feelings:

> "Overall, this lesson would be a terrible, unplanned, pointless waste of time if used as an actual lesson. On the other hand, it was very effective in helping our class understand what not to do, and why it is important to use the proper steps in a lesson plan."

"This was an eye-opening activity for me because I realized how a student would actually feel if I had them do this same type of activity. We are going to have a classroom of students and this activity does not aid in their learning. They may be students who have trouble reading and this activity would not have assisted them in their reading."

"I believe that the activity you gave us the first week of class was very effective! You were able to present your point of view of how a student would feel, by getting everyone's attention. You made each of us (future teachers) learn by having us experience the rage, confusion, and feelings of powerlessness this test presented. These are the feelings that many students experience by the hands of teachers who practice what you did, not for effect, but because this is their normal practice. I will never forget the feelings I had! Because of this experience, I will think of my students."

"I definitely found this lesson to be effective on your part. This is because the quality of the lesson was so poor, it brought rise to a variety of feelings in me that I will never

forget. Since this lesson made me feel this way, I will definitely try to avoid this procedure in anything I teach."

"The reason this was an effective lesson to give to college students in a content area reading class was because it was such a vivid example of what NOT to do in a classroom. We experienced first-hand having to read a very difficult text, then take a quiz when we had little comprehension of the text. We personally felt the panic. This is what we do not want our students to feel. I know that after that lesson, I will be more sensitive to how my lessons affect my students' feeling and I will try to eliminate that horrible feeling of panic."

"I would say that the experience with this failed strategy is a vivid reminder why it is so essential to engage one's students with material that is relevant and appropriate. It is also a reminder of why it is so important to give our students the tools to manage difficult reading material. This will have a great impact on their education which in turn will affect their entire life."

By having to participate in the "terrible lesson" experience my students were forced to contend with the task of trying to comprehend a difficult reading assignment with the anxiety of a quiz affecting their intake and understanding of information. It is heartening to be able to say that the number of "YES" answers to the question "Do you believe that every teacher is a reading teacher?" is always greater at the end of the quarter than it was at the beginning. And even though those doubters with folded arms and negative attitudes who line the back of the room may never be convinced 100%, the hold-outs leave my class a bit wiser about the role reading will play in the lives of their future students.

References

Billmeyer, R. & Barton, M. (1998), *Teaching Content Area Reading: If Not Me, Then Who?*, Aurora, CO: McRel

Richardson, J. & Morgan, R. (1997), *Content Area Reading*, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing.

Dr. Patricia Luse Smith teaches at Eastern Washington University, Cheney, WA.

The Reading Professor
2000, 22, (2) 89-94

EDITOR'S CORNER
INNOVATIVE PRACTICES AMONG EDUCATORS

Where Are They Taking Those Books?

Even at mid afternoon certain neighborhoods in our city are scary. Taking a shortcut through a side street, I reflected on the knifings, shootings and drug arrests reported in the Lansing State Journal for the past three years on the very street where my car was stopped behind a school bus. Just then a hoard of young children streamed from the bus. This was their neighborhood; these were their homes. Children were trapped here along with their mothers or other family members who cared for them. I drove on. At the corner was a small store selling bread, milk, cigarettes and beer. I had an idea....

For several years the LVA-Capital Area Literacy Coalition has been collecting gently used children's books. We place barrels in the malls, at bookstores such as Barnes and Noble and Schulert" and at Video to Go. People have been so generous that we have collected and distributed about 200,000 books, many of them beautiful, delightful and expensive. We have been giving the books to children in our programs: Read to Succeed; Family School Partnership; Family Literacy; Migrant Literacy and parents in our Adult Literacy and

English as a Second Language Programs. But we still had a lot of books.

Our Americorps VISTA, Kathy Brennan, coordinates the Children's Book Drop. She was given the charge, eagerly accepted, to go to the neighborhoods with the greatest poverty (and usually the highest crime rate), locate a small convenience store and ask the manager if he could leave a box of books that parents and children could take. No one said, "No." Twenty four hours after leaving books, we have received calls from store managers saying, "We need more books. They're all gone." We expanded to leaving the books in laundromats and other locations where a low-income clientele might find them. Mothers in tears, said, "Bless you for these books."

Eighth grade students decorated our first set of boxes. We had a set of posters from Literacy Volunteers of America featuring fathers reading to their children. The fathers' pictures were African American, Hispanic and Caucasian. The poster pictures were cut out and taped to the boxes along with signs: "Free Books" and "Read to Your Kid." We loaded the boxes with books for toddlers, elementary and secondary students. And we tucked in a few that adults might like. A young teen volunteer asked, "If you are giving away books, then why should anyone buy them?" In a few years he would be able to answer his own question. Hardly any parents in the neighborhoods we selected could afford to buy children's books. More affluent parents who could and did buy children's

books would never stop their cars in these areas and enter the stores.

How do you measure the impact of this effort? Will the books start a lifetime of leisure reading? Will parents read to their children and talk about the ideas in the books?

We usually advertise our services to encourage participation and support. We don't advertise our book distribution in poor, often crime ridden areas for who would want their neighbors described in this way? Nevertheless, our organization needs support for this and other cost effective literacy efforts. Non profit literacy organizations need volunteers and financial contributions. It is hard to imagine any program more cost effective than collecting used children's books and taking them to where they are needed, yet even this effort has some costs. Visit the literacy volunteer organization in your community. Become informed about their activities. You may be surprised about how much good they are doing and how easy it is for you to make a contribution.

This innovative practice report was developed by Dr. Lois Bader who teaches at Michigan State University. She is the Executive Director of the L.V.A. Capital Area Literacy Coalition in Lansing.

The Reading Professor
2000, 22, (2) 92-94

EDITOR'S CORNER
INNOVATIVE PRACTICES AMONG EDUCATORS

Preparing for Inclusion

Recent years have seen an increased focus on inclusive education. In the US, Canada, and beyond, school jurisdictions have committed to educating children with special needs in regular schools. These inclusive schools view children with disabilities as full-time members of the classroom community. One of the issues that arises when discussing inclusive practices relates to just how to prepare new teachers for these diverse settings. Teachers' implementation of inclusive practices often depends on such things as their knowledge, acceptance, understanding, and previous experience of individuals with disabilities.

At the Faculty of Education, Nipissing University, pre-service teachers are required to take a course in Special Education. Those intending to teach in elementary schools must undertake a unique special education project. They must choose a particular disability (e.g. deafness; autism), research the condition, its impact on the child, and use that information to form the basis for a children's storybook. The purpose of the storybook is to increase children's awareness of disabilities

through the medium of the story. The final product can be as creative as they wish and must be presented in a format that can be read to and/or by the students in a classroom.

This project provides the pre-service teachers with an opportunity to develop and to extend their personal knowledge of a disability, and to broaden their understanding of the diverse classroom contexts that they will experience in the future. It also challenges them to think critically about such things as:

- using personal knowledge in a practical way
- helping children to understand disabilities
- what children learn from the stories they read
- how children with disabilities are portrayed in stories
- selecting children's books for class and school libraries

The resulting 'books' are quite remarkable and come in a wide range of formats. Some of the most powerful are hitherto untold personal stories about dealing with disabilities. Some candidates elect to integrate this project with their French option and produce their book in French. The final roundup of the project involves a book display and sharing session for all participants.

Innovative Practices Among Educators is a regular column in each issue of *The Reading Professor*.

The editor invites members of PRTE to submit 2-3 page summaries of innovative projects that would be of interest to the readership.

This report of an innovative practice was developed by Dr. Eileen Winter of Nipissing University, North Bay, Ontario in Canada

The Reading Professor
2000, 22, (2) 95-96

Book Review

Handbook of College Reading and Study Strategy Research. Rona F. Flippo and David C. Caverly (Eds.). 2000. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc. (10 Industrial Avenue, Mahwah, NJ 07430-2262, USA). 509 pp. Softcover. ISBN 0-8058-3004-9. US $55.00.

This recently published volume is a very comprehensive assembly of what is presently known about education's often marginalized (but probably most necessary) area of study, College Reading and Study Skills. The ***Handbook of College Reading and Study Strategy Research*** appears to be an essential reference for any professional whose duties include authorizing, planning, developing, or delivering and assessing appropriate, effective educational opportunities for the numerous and varied underprepared potential post-secondary students that must be served today.

Readers will find the wide overview of a foreword by Martha Maxwell, followed by individual chapters that clarify virtually every issue and topic that is likely to confront today's developmental education managers and practitioners, in this time of rapid, but certain institutional and societal change. The breadth of considered topics in this handbook ranges from the history of the field, through various types of

learners and particular strategies, to technology and reading tests, to name just a few in very general fashion.

Singular in accomplishing needed connection of Developmental Education's history, theory, documented best practices, implications for instruction, as well as recommendations for areas of needed research, the *Handbook of College Reading and Study Strategy Research* should be on the desk of anyone seriously involved in this field.

Users can expect fourteen chapters (509 pages) of useful information that is thoroughly referenced and indexed by author and subject, should added investigation of topics be required. The ***Handbook of College Reading and Study Strategy Research*** is strongly recommended as a collection of critical information by developmental education's most credible authors.

The reviewer, Mr. Burdette R. Graham, is a developmental educator located at Rock Valley College, Rockford, IL.

The Reading Professor
2000, 22, (2) 97-98

Book Review

Read It Aloud! Using Literature in the Secondary Content Classroom. Judy S. Richardson. 2000. International Reading Association. (800 Barksdale Road, Neward, DE 19714-8139, USA). 107 pp. Softcover. ISBN 0-87207-256-8. $13.56.

Buy this book and recommend it to your students because it has a wealth of information that can easily be shared. Even a discouraged or jaded teacher would say, "Maybe I'll try reading aloud" after reading Richardson's short book "because it sounds like the students are really responding and interacting." Or "I didn't think students could learn so much from oral reading, even in subjects like math and science."

Richardson's enthusiasm is infectious. She describes the benefits of reading aloud in social studies, science, math, geography, music, art, health and physical education, as well as in English and language arts. There are also chapters concerning reading aloud for second language learners and for special populations, such as adult beginning readers and those with disabilities. Richardson recommends books and specific passages for each area and gives suggested activities and points for discussion, along with principles for locating and selecting read-alouds. The book is based on her "Read It Aloud"

columns in the *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* and pulls the topic together in a very engaging way. The book is suitable for middle school as well as secondary school and adults.

The reviewer, Dr. June D. Knafle, teaches reading and children's literature at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Professors of Reading
Teacher Educators

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 798
Dubuque, IA 52001